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ABSTRACT

This document, comprising volume 5, issues 1-3 of Learning Languages: The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL), includes the following articles: "Poverty, Race, and Foreign Language Immersion: Predictors of Math and English Language Arts Performance" (Stephen J. Caldas, Nicole Boudreaux); "Meet a Foreign Language Advocate" (Tara Gentry); "Excerpts from Joe Kiebesh's Keynote Speech at the NNELL Summer Conference"; "Let's Assess: Connecting Students, Parents, and Teachers" (Janet Kucerik); "Content-Based Language Learning--Why and How?" (Mihaela Brumen); "'Espanol para ti': A Video Program That Works" (Elena Steele, Holly Johnson); "Language and Culture Through SALSA" Greg Duncan). Regular features include the following: "Notes from the President"; "Resource Information"; "Activities for Your Classroom"; "Classroom Resources"; "In Memoriam"; "Grant Information Announcements"; "NNELL News"; and "Calendar." This journal serves the early language learning profession by providing a medium for the sharing of information, ideas, and concerns of its members and readers. (KFT)

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Volume 5, No. 1 (Fall 1999), No. 2 (Winter 2000), [and] No. 3 (Spring 2000)

Marcia H. Rosenbusch, Ed.

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Learning Languages

The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning

Fall 1999
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Learning Languages: The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning is the official publication of NNELL. It serves the profession by providing a medium for the sharing of information, ideas, and concerns among teachers, administrators, researchers, and others interested in the early learning of languages. The journal reflects NNELL's commitment to promoting opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language and culture in addition to their own. See the inside of the back cover for more information on NNELL.

In an effort to address the interests of the profession, both practical and scholarly articles are published. Practical articles describe innovative approaches to teaching and the administration of effective language programs for children. Scholarly articles report on original research and cite both current research and theory as a basis for making recommendations for practice. Scholarly articles are refereed, i.e., reviewed anonymously by at least three readers. Readers include members of the NNELL executive board, the editorial advisory board, and invited guest reviewers who have expertise in the area. Refereed articles are identified as such in the journal. Write to the editor to request a copy of author guidelines for preparing articles, or retrieve them from NNELL's website: www.educ.iastate.edu/nnell

Submissions: Deadlines are: fall issue—May 1; winter issue—Nov. 1; spring issue—Feb. 1. Articles, classroom activities, and materials may be submitted to the appropriate contributing editor (see below). Send announcements, conference information, and original children's work (such as line drawings, short stories, and poems) to the editor. Children's work needs to be accompanied by written permission from the child's parent or guardian and must include the child's name, age, school, and the teacher's name, address, and telephone (add fax and e-mail address, if available).

Submit a favorite classroom activity for the "Activities for Your Classroom" section by sending a description of the activity that includes title, context, objectives, targeted standards, materials, procedure, and assessment. Include pictures or drawings as illustration, if available. Send with your name, address, and phone number to the Classroom Activities editor listed below.

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Learning Languages

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Notes from the President

Great news! U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard W. Riley, has announced that he is dedicated to seeing that 50% of the students in the United States will be studying a foreign language in elementary school by the year 2010. In addition, Secretary Riley promises advocacy from the Department of Education to help ensure that a greater percentage of U.S. students begin foreign language study in elementary school and continue that study through middle and high school. Due to the efforts of JNCL-NCLIS (Joint National Committee on Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies), NNELL, and other advocates for early language learning, more financial help is on the horizon for elementary school foreign language programs. We believe that this year's funding for the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) will be increased by $4M and that funding in future years will increase dramatically. Congratulations to J. David Edwards, JNCL-NCLIS, the hard-working members of NNELL, such as Kay Hewitt and Mary Lynn Redmond, and many other tireless advocates. Advocacy does pay off!

Speaking of advocacy, words such as *dedicated, filled with energy, selfless,* and *able to leap tall buildings in a single bound* come to mind when I think of the participants in the summer NNELL conference held in collaboration with Glastonbury public schools at the University of Hartford, Connectiut, in July 1999. Thanks to funding from FLAP and the support of the Glastonbury school administration, many of NNELL's state and regional representatives, as well as interested participants and guest speakers, attended a conference entitled "Advocacy, Articulation and Curriculum Development." It provided a stimulating environment for the discussion of advocacy for elementary school language programs. The discussion focused on the question, Who are the internal and external advocates for language learning at our local, state, regional and national levels?

Representatives from 25 non-language education groups also were invited to attend the conference. Although not all could send representatives, those that did found the conference exciting and returned to their organizations with a renewed commitment to champion the cause of early language learning. Extensive follow-up questionnaires have been distributed to organizations that could not send representatives. Results will be available in a later issue of *Learning Languages*. The questionnaires asked administrators and leaders of these organizations to help us identify areas of our advocacy that should be strengthened and improved. Most of the organizations contacted appear to be open to further collaboration with NNELL and other language groups.

Participants at the conference heard from school superintendents, principals at every level of instruction, school board members, curriculum directors, state department of education leaders, university professors and presidents, and experts in the fields of the arts and humanities. Secretary Riley sent Heidi Ramirez (Department of Education) to give a presentation on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. *(Ed: See information on this act in* Learning Languages *4[3], pp. 16–19.)*

J. David Edwards (JNCL-NCLIS) spoke about strategies for working with Congress and the Administration. All speakers delivered the message that language teachers, supervisors, and professional language organizations need to advocate more strongly for long-sequence programs. Support for these programs is present but not well cultivated.

U.S. Department of Education officials and school administrators encouraged us to celebrate our successes by sharing anecdotes about our graduates. Graduates from Glastonbury encouraged us to maintain our efforts to support early language learning because of the pay off in language proficiency and a promising future for our students. One student in particular, Joseph Kiebesh, valedictorian for the class of 1999 in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, Washington, DC, spoke eloquently about his language-learning experiences in elementary through high school. *(ED: See excerpts from Kiebesh's speech in this issue.)* Kiebesh encouraged all participants at the conference to hold fast to their dreams of a linguistically competent citizenry, able to understand the world of the twenty-first century, and ready to make significant contributions to the quality of life in the United States and abroad.

Dr. Humphrey Tonkin, President Emeritus of the University of Hartford, spoke about the rationale that we should use to advocate for longer and earlier sequences of language learning. Dr. Tonkin suggested that reliance on economic need as a rationale for learning languages may not serve us well in the long run because English continues to be perceived as the language of commerce. More challenging, however, was his view that the way a person develops as a human being is influenced by the intersection of language, thought, and identity. He urged us to put forth multiple reasons for early language learning, with the understanding that many parents are motivated both by their children's potential economic future and their ability to define a future in which they can find deeper meaning to their existence in society and on this planet.

In addition to presentations and discussions with non-language educators, conference participants talked and planned into the wee hours of the morning. They celebrated at some of Hartford's cultural jewels, relaxed, and enjoyed getting to know each other better. State and regional representatives returned home with a promise to provide three updates during the year about how they are advocating for language learning outside our traditional professional organizations. Their first reports were due October 15, and I will share the results at the NNELL networking session in Dallas.

Also, as a result of Glastonbury's FLAP grant, we will be hosting a Web site linked to the NNELL and CAL Web sites. We will post advocacy ideas, the text of advocacy documents, and updates from the conference. We will also begin to publicize phases two and three of our grant—curriculum development and articulation in grades K–12. Watch for the Web address in a future issue of *Learning Languages*.

Finally, I want to thank you for your hard work on behalf of NNELL and early language learning. Our field would not be at this exciting milestone were it not for the zealous commitment of elementary language teachers in the United States. As my tenure as president draws to a close, I feel very proud to be a language teacher. Best of luck in 2000!

Our field would not be at this exciting milestone were it not for the zealous commitment of elementary language teachers in the United States.

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Poverty, Race, and Foreign Language Immersion: Predictors of Math and English Language Arts Performance

Refereed Article

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In the United States in the last thirty years, foreign language immersion has become an accepted pedagogical approach for teaching second languages in schools throughout the world. Moreover, research indicates that not only do students immersed in a second language achieve command of that language with near-native fluency, but also schooling in a second language does not have adverse consequences for subjects studied in their native language, and often enhances performance in it (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Bankens & Akins, 1989; Campbell, 1984; Lapkin & Swain, 1984; Snow, 1992). However, most of the research in this area has been done with middle and upper-middle class students, with relatively little attention paid to how foreign language immersion programs might benefit children in high poverty schools (Hollobow, Genesee, & Lambert, 1991). For example, an important question usually overlooked in immersion research is whether being educated in a non-native language contributes to or detracts from the academic performance of low socioeconomic status (SES) children in their native language. The current study attempts to answer this question among French immersion students in 13 Louisiana elementary and middle schools.

School Language Immersion Models

There are typically two models of immersion. These include total immersion, where the vast majority of the instruction is in the target language (usually with only reading in the native language), and partial immersion, where only part of the instructional day (usually 50% and up) is in the target language (Snow, 1990). Immersion programs all share the goal of producing fluent speakers of the target language and a belief that immersion is the most efficient and most natural way to teach a second language. The research supports this perspective (Adiv, 1980; Campbell, Gray, Rhodes, & Snow, 1985; Gray, 1986; Theberge,

1990) and has moved on to focusing more on measuring the indirect effects of this teaching method.

North American French immersion as an elementary school curriculum started in 1965 in the village of St. Lambert, Quebec, a Montreal suburb. The "St. Lambert Experiment" was started by English parents who wanted to give their English-speaking children a chance to compete economically in their officially bilingual country (Lambert & Tucker, 1972). In many ways, Louisiana can relate to the French Canadian experience. Its history is dominated by the French influence, but like parts of Canada outside of Quebec, it has become isolated from the French-speaking world. In the southwestern part of the state, known as Acadiana, as much as 50% of some parishes (counties) speak French, though these individuals are largely over 50 years of age (Henry & Bankston, 1999). In the recent movement to save French, it quickly became evident that teaching French as a second language (thirty to fifty minutes a day) was not going to ensure the survival of the language in Louisiana. Though these classes exposed children to some of the rudiments of French (greetings, songs, counting, colors, etc.), it simply was not enough time to develop speaking proficiency or fluency in the language. Individual parishes, which have the same boundaries as the school districts, began to look for more viable alternatives.

History of French Immersion in Louisiana

In 1971, St. Martin Parish received a federal grant to begin a bilingual program where daily instruction was divided equally between French-speaking and English-speaking teachers. Located deep in the heart of Acadiana, it was an appropriate place to launch school French immersion, where fully 60% of the local community still reported speaking French in 1990 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990). Louisiana now has French immersion programs in the parishes of St. Martin, Calcasieu, Assumption, Lafayette, Acadia, Orleans, and St. Landry. In total, 21 schools currently offer French immersion to approximately 3,000 students.

In total, 21 schools currently offer French immersion to approximately 3,000 students.

It is difficult to summarize the teaching methodology used in Louisiana's various immersion programs, as it varies from parish to parish, and even school to school. One thing they all have in common is a heavy reliance on native French-speaking teachers, mostly from Belgium, France, and Canada. These "Foreign Associate Teachers" do not have to have special foreign language training, or meet Louisiana teacher certification requirements. Additionally, there is a fairly strong "heritage" element to all of Louisiana's French immersion programs, since one of the primary reasons for developing them in the first place was to help preserve French-speaking in the state. Thus, they often incorporate elements of the state's heritage to help reinforce the language. For example, in Lafayette parish, immersion students were paired with French-speaking senior citizens in a nursing home, with whom they visited and conversed in French. Other immersion activities may include demonstrations or lectures delivered to the students in French from local Francophone artisans. Where French immersion has moved into the secondary level, less time is usually allocated to instruction in French. All programs include teaching some English language arts. A common arrangement at the elementary level is to offer science, social studies, math, and perhaps even physical education and art in French, while teaching reading in English (Boudreaux, 1998).

French Immersion and Academic Performance

Evidence from Louisiana's largest and longest-running French immersion program, in Calcasieu Parish, indicates that children in the program are

scoring higher on the state's mandated standardized tests than those in the district not participating in the program (Bankens & Akins, 1989). However, student demographic factors, such as poverty status, gender, and race, were not controlled for in the program's evaluation.

Both Canadian and American research on language immersion programs have often overlooked student demographic factors such as SES and race when evaluating the effectiveness of their programs. In Louisiana, not only is immersion research which utilizes sociodemographic information essentially nonexistent, but with only a few exceptions (i.e., Boudreaux, 1998), the state is even lacking strong empirical research on the effectiveness of its French immersion programs in general. Thus, the need for a comprehensive study of immersion programs in Louisiana has become stronger, in view of their popularity, and in view of the increasing number of parents wanting to involve their children in such programs. Moreover, in a state where 23.6% of the population lives in poverty (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994), and 45.5% of the public school population is comprised of African American students (Louisiana Department of Education, 1996), the need to control for these factors when determining the effects of school language immersion becomes paramount. The current study attempts to overcome both deficits in language immersion research by conducting statistically rigorous research using testing and demographic data from a large sample of Louisiana's French immersion students.

Thus, the need for a comprehensive study of immersion programs in Louisiana has become stronger, in view of their popularity, and in view of the increasing number of parents wanting to involve their children in such programs.

Methodology

The study population includes 1,941 immersion and non-immersion students in grades 3, 5, and 7 from 13 Louisiana schools in 4 parishes offering French immersion programs. All were in the southern part of the state. Of these students, 302 were in immersion programs which offer from 35% through 77% of the daily instruction entirely in French. No schools offered 100% (full) French immersion, as every immersion student was taught at least reading in the English language. With very few exceptions, students entered their French immersion programs in either kindergarten or first grade. In the study, 82% of students are white and 18% are African American. Of the immersion students, 277 are white, and 25 are African Americans. Two mismatches should be noted here. The percentage of African American students in immersion (8%) is less than the percentage of African American students in the 13 schools in the study (18%). In addition, neither percentage reflects the high (46%) percentage of African American students in the general student population of Louisiana public schools. These discrepancies can both be explained in part by the fact that the Louisiana French renaissance movement—the major force behind the creation of French Immersion in Louisiana—was originally a movement primarily among white "Cajuns" (descendants of Acadians from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick deported to Louisiana in the years 1755–1800; for more information on the Louisiana French renaissance, see Caldas, 1998). Many of the schools chosen for French immersion had a majority of these white Cajun parents. The Creole movement (Creole referring to French-speaking African Americans in Louisiana) has been quieter. In the last three years, however, efforts have been made to correct the under-representation of African American students in immersion programs. Two parishes have since opened French immersion programs in primarily African American schools. Future studies should show an increase in African American participation in lower grades. In any event, these demographics—African American and white—underscore a heritage dimension to these immersion programs which sets them apart from

foreign language instruction disconnected from the children's backgrounds.

Dependent Variable

All Louisiana public school students in grades 3, 5, and 7 are administered the state standardized Louisiana Educational Achievement Program (LEAP) criterion referenced test in April of each year. Test results from spring 1997 are being used in this study. The LEAP test has two main components at these grade levels: English Language Arts and Mathematics. Each component included 60 to 70 multiple-choice items. The dependent variable is the percent correct on each of these components. Since special education students may test under different circumstances than regular education students, they were not included in the study. Given that there were no identifiable special education students in the French immersion population, and since special education students tended to score much lower than average, excluding them from our analyses inflates the non-immersion LEAP test averages. Thus, all of our findings are conservative.

Independent Variables

The following independent variables were used:

- *Student Grade*: Students' grade levels were 3, 5, or 7. Analysis of covariance, a statistical procedure to determine linear relationships between categorical and other variables (Yoshinori Kamo, personal communication, May 19, 1999) revealed that this categorical variable had a somewhat weak (though statistically significant) negative linear relationship to the English language arts test scores, and a very strong negative linear relationship with math scores. We therefore felt justified entering grade level as an interval-level numeric variable in all regression analyses.
- *Student Race*: Since the vast majority of the students were either white or African American (only three students were another race), and we wanted to create a dichotomous (dummy) variable for race to be used in regression, we excluded all other races. Whites were assigned a value of "1" and African Americans were assigned a value of "2."
- *School Poverty Level*: Each student was assigned the percent of his/her school's population which participated in the federal free/reduced-price lunch program. (Schools cannot release data on individual students in the free/reduced-price lunch program.) Earlier studies have determined that school SES in Louisiana is almost as highly correlated with individual student achievement as is an individual's own SES (Caldas & Bankston, 1997). Thus, it is reasonable to expect that a child attending a school with a high percentage of students receiving free lunch is likely to come from a home with a relatively modest income, given that assignments to a school are based on residential boundaries (even if he/she is not himself/herself eligible for free lunch). School percentages ranged from 9% to 72%, with almost two-thirds of all students in schools with 35% free/reduced lunch or less.
- *Percent Student Time in French Immersion (French)*: Each French immersion student was assigned a value representing the percent of time spent in his/her school's immersion program. Immersion programs in Louisiana are individually set up by local school boards according to their preferences, their finances, and their own unique circumstances. As a result, no two programs are the same, especially when it comes to the length of daily instruction in French. These percentages were verified by conferring with school administrators at each of the 13 immersion schools. Values ranged from 30% to 77 %, with 83% of all immersion students spending 50% or more of their school day in French.
- *Gender (dichotomous dummy variable)*: Males were assigned a value of "1," females a "2."

Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) multiple regression (forced entry) was used to predict the dependent variables—English language arts and math LEAP scores—using the inde-

pendent variables grade, race, school poverty status, gender, and time spent in French immersion. This statistical technique allows us to determine the effect of French immersion, while controlling for other important factors that have been determined to have an influence on school achievement (Caldas, 1993).

Results

Table 1 includes univariate statistics of the study population on the English language arts (hereafter just "English") portion of the LEAP test. The sample is divided into students in low poverty schools (50% or fewer students in free/reduced-price lunch program) and high poverty schools (greater than 50% students in free/reduced-price lunch program).

We see that among immersion students overall, both African Americans (average 87.5% correct) and whites (average 89.6% correct) score higher than African American and white non-immersion students (average of 78.4% and 85.6% correct, respectively). Overall immersion and non-immersion African Americans' scores are lower than their white counterparts. In high poverty schools, the divergence of English scores between immersion and non-immersion students *among* the races is not only greater (88.1% versus 76.6% for African Americans; 89.2% versus 82.8% for whites), but African American immersion students actually score higher in poor schools than they do overall. Whereas in poor schools African American immersion students' mean score is only about a point lower than whites, non-immersion African American students' mean score is more than six points lower than their white counterparts. Finally, immersion students do better than non-immersion students at each of the three grade levels.

. . . immersion students do better than non-immersion students at each of the three grade levels.

Table 2 includes univariate statistics of the study population on the math portion of the LEAP test.

We see that among immersion students overall, both African Americans (average 90.4% correct) and whites (average 89.5% correct) score higher than African American and white non-immersion students (average of 74.6% and 82.3% correct, respectively). As with English, the gap between non-immersion African Americans and whites is fairly large (seven points). However, immersion African Americans actually outscore immersion whites (1 point gap). Importantly, however, the math gap between immersion and non-immersion students, for both African Americans and whites, is almost double the English gap. Math scores decrease for all student categories as grade level increases. Still, immersion students do better than non-immersion students at each grade level. Interestingly, though non-immersion African American students do worse than their white counterparts, those in French immersion outscore their white immersion counterparts in both the third and fifth grade, though the number of African American immersion students is quite small.

Table 3 shows bivariate, Pearson correlation coefficients between the study's variables.

Here, we see that both English and math scores correlate moderately high ($r = .516^{***}$), as we would expect on two measures of academic achievement. Also, English correlates positively with French immersion ($r = .144^{***}$), though math has an even stronger correlation with time spent in immersion ($r = .212^{**}$). Thus, as instructional time spent in French immersion increases, so do both English and math scores, though the relationship with rising math scores is even greater. However, both English and math scores are negatively correlated with poverty ($r = -.243^{***}$; $r = -.121^{***}$) and race ($r = -.228^{**}$, $r = -.195^{***}$). This means that students in higher poverty schools and African Americans score less well on both academic measures. Interestingly, though there is only a small, positive

Table 1. Average Percent Correct: English Language Arts *Scores by Race, Poverty, and Grade*

	Immersion		Non-Immersion	
	African Americans N = 25	Whites N = 277	African Americans N = 319	Whites N = 1320
ALL	$\bar{x}$ = 87.5% SD = 8.7	$\bar{x}$ = 89.6% SD = 8.4	$\bar{x}$ = 78.4% SD = 14.1	$\bar{x}$ = 85.6% SD = 11.7
High Poverty Schools	$\bar{x}$ = 88.1% SD = 9.0 N = 20	$\bar{x}$ = 89.2% SD = 9.0 N = 93	$\bar{x}$ = 76.6% SD = 14.7 N = 194	$\bar{x}$ = 82.8% SD = 13.7 N = 389
Grade 3	$\bar{x}$ = 86.7% SD = 9.0 N = 18	$\bar{x}$ = 89.1% SD = 8.7 N = 141	$\bar{x}$ = 76.2% SD = 15.4 N = 110	$\bar{x}$ = 85.3% SD = 11.9 N = 458
Grade 5	$\bar{x}$ = 85.4% SD = 9.2 N = 4	$\bar{x}$ = 89.7% SD = 8.5 N = 98	$\bar{x}$ = 74.6% SD = 13.9 N = 87	$\bar{x}$ = 83.9% SD = 12.4 N = 438
Grade 7	$\bar{x}$ = 94.9% SD = 1.3 N = 3	$\bar{x}$ = 91.5% SD = 6.8 N = 38	$\bar{x}$ = 83.0% SD = 11.6 N = 122	$\bar{x}$ = 87.6% SD = 10.4 N = 424

Table 2. Average Percent Correct: Mathematics *Scores by Race, Poverty, and Grade*

	Immersion		Non-Immersion	
	African Americans N = 25	Whites N = 277	African Americans N = 319	Whites N = 1320
ALL	$\bar{x}$ = 90.4% SD = 9.64	$\bar{x}$ = 89.5% SD = 9.9	$\bar{x}$ = 74.6% SD = 16.9	$\bar{x}$ = 82.3% SD = 15.0
High Poverty Schools	$\bar{x}$ = 90.1% SD = 10.16 N = 20	$\bar{x}$ = 90.9% SD = 9.3 N = 93	$\bar{x}$ = 75.8% SD = 14.7 N = 194	$\bar{x}$ = 80.8% SD = 16.2 N = 389
Grade 3	$\bar{x}$ = 94.2% SD = 4.4 N = 18	$\bar{x}$ = 93.8% SD = 6.7 N = 141	$\bar{x}$ = 85.5% SD = 10.7 N = 110	$\bar{x}$ = 91.4% SD = 9.1 N = 458
Grade 5	$\bar{x}$ = 88.4% SD = 11.3 N = 4	$\bar{x}$ = 86.8% SD = 10.3 N = 98	$\bar{x}$ = 74.7% SD = 14.0 N = 87	$\bar{x}$ = 82.0% SD = 13.2 N = 438
Grade 7	$\bar{x}$ = 70.1% SD = 2.1 N = 3	$\bar{x}$ = 80.5% SD = 10.6 N = 38	$\bar{x}$ = 64.4% SD = 17.2 N = 122	$\bar{x}$ = 72.8% SD = 16.0 N = 424

Table 3. Pearson Product Moment Correlations

	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Percent Correct: Lang. Arts	.516***	−.243***	.144***	−.228***	.069**	.095***
2. Percent Correct: Math		−.121***	.212***	−.195***	−.522***	.010
3. School Poverty			−.012	.253***	−.094***	−.008
4. French Immersion				−.099***	−.197***	.077***
5. African American Race					.036	−.038
6. Grade						−.007
7. Gender						

**p < .01 ***p < .001

As daily time in French immersion increases, English scores tend to increase as well.

correlation between English scores and grade level, the association between math scores and grade level is negative, and the strongest coefficient noted: r = −.522***. Thus, as grade level increases, math scores dip markedly. Still, since there are no excessively large correlations between any of the study variables, we can safely include them all in a regression equation with no need for concern over multicolinearity problems.

Table 4 includes all major factors in four regression models that predict both English and math scores.

Standardized regression coefficients (β) are used to determine the unique effect of each independent variable on the dependent variables English and math. Values range from −1 to 1, and, since standardized, can be compared one to another. We turn first to English, where the best predictor of scores, a moderate one, is school poverty (β = −.194***): as school poverty level increases, English scores decrease. The second-best predictor is student race (β = −.165***), indicating that African American students tend to score lower in English, controlling for the other factors. The third factor in magnitude of influence on English scores is French immersion, which has a small to moderate (β = .141***) effect. As daily time in French immersion increases, English scores tend to increase as well. So, we see that French immersion does have a positive association on this measure of school achievement, holding constant the study's other factors. School grade has a relatively small, positive association with English scores (β = .085***), with the association of gender and English being the weakest (β = .077***): females tended to score slightly better than males in English. Overall, this regression model explains only about 12% of the variance in English test scores (R^2 = .116***), suggesting that there are other important factors that could help predict English scores.

Turning to our first math regression model, we see that unlike English, the best predictor of how students did in math was grade level (β = −.510***): as grade level increases, scores fall precipitously. The second-best predictor of scores was school

poverty (β = −.137***). As with English, the association between math and race is negative (African Americans do less well, *ceteris paribus*), though the effect is somewhat smaller (β = −.132***). The association of French immersion and math scores is also smaller than with English, though it is positive (β = .100***). Recalling that the Pearson correlation coefficient for math and French immersion (r = .212***) was higher than for English and French immersion (.144***), we can now see that it is due to the much higher proportion of students in grade 3 (where they score better) than in grades 5 and 7. Finally, gender has no statistically significant relationship with math scores. The math regression model explains almost three times as much variance in math scores (R^2 = .328***) as the English model explains. However, it appears that it is the strong negative association between grade level and math scores that accounts for much of this difference.

In Regression 2, we entered a fifth variable to our two models, French by School Poverty Status, in order to see whether the effect of French immersion on English and math scores might vary depending on the poverty status of the school (an interaction effect). Considering English first, we see that indeed this interaction variable has a small to moderate positive effect on English test scores (β = .139**). This indicates that at higher levels of school poverty, French immersion has a *greater* positive influence on English scores. In the Regression 2 math model, the French immersion/poverty interaction variable

. . . at higher levels of school poverty, French immersion has a *greater* positive influence on English scores.

Table 4. Standardized Regression Coefficients with Standard Errors (in parentheses) of French Immersion and Control Variable Effects on Academic Achievement

	English Language Arts		Math	
	Regression 1	Regression 2	Regression 1	Regression 2
French Immersion	.141*** (.013)	−.016 (.032)	.100*** (.014)	−.025 (.035)
School Poverty	−.194*** (.013)	−.218*** (.014)	−.137*** (.015)	−.161*** (.016)
Race	−.165*** (.706)	−.163*** (.705)	−.132*** (.775)	−.130*** (.774)
School Grade	.085*** (.162)	.085*** (.162)	−.510*** (.178)	−.510*** (.178)
Gender	.077*** (.520)	.077*** (.519)	−.007 (.571)	−.007 (.570)
French by Poverty		.139** (.001)		.139** (.001)
Adjusted R^2	.116***	.119***	.328***	.331***
N	1941	1941	1941	1941

*< .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

exerts exactly the same magnitude of effect on math scores (β = .139**), indicating the same thing: the effect of French immersion on math scores is greater in high poverty schools, controlling for all independent variables.

Discovering this differential effect of French immersion on both English and math scores, we bifurcated the sample into low poverty schools and high poverty schools. Next, we ran regression models for both low poverty and high poverty schools, for both English and math scores. We decided to keep our independent variable "school poverty" in these models, acknowledging that it would now have a more restricted range. This allows us to see if attending the "poorest" of the low poverty schools, or the "poorest" of the high poverty schools continues to negatively affect academic achievement among more homogenous groupings of students. Table 5 shows the standardized regression coefficients for these runs.

Considering English first, we see that French immersion has an effect on English test scores that is markedly stronger in high poverty (β = .177***) than in low poverty (β = .122***) schools. Moreover, and importantly, in high poverty schools the effect of French immersion surpasses in magnitude the effect of race (β = -.165***) on English scores. Thus, we can say that in poor schools, time spent in French immersion eclipses the association between race and English test performance. However, we see that even after reducing the range of the variable poverty by roughly half, being in the poorest of the low poverty schools, and being in the poorest of the high poverty schools has the strongest association—a negative one—with English scores.

The effect of French immersion on math scores is also noticeably stronger in high poverty (β = .126***) than in low poverty (β = .085***) schools, though the coefficients are smaller than in the English model. Importantly, however, in high poverty schools French immersion (β = .126***) becomes almost as good a predictor of math scores as race (β = -.130***). The negative effect on math scores of being in the poorest of the low poverty schools (β = -.142***) is smaller than in the English model (β = -.223***), and being in the poorest of the high poverty schools has no statistically significant association with math scores, as it does with English scores. Grade level has a stronger negative influence on math scores in high poverty schools (β = -.577***) than in low poverty schools (β = -.447***), and in part accounts for the greater explained variance in this model (R^2 = .415***) than all the other models. However, another reason for the increase in explained variance of high poverty schools is the strength of the relationship between French immersion and math scores, since the effect of all other factors except school grade decreased in magnitude from the low poverty schools to high poverty schools model. It should still be noted, however, that more than half of the variance in math scores, and 89% of the variance in English scores remains unexplained, suggesting that there are important factors we have not accounted for.

Conclusions

Students in the French immersion programs in the 13 schools included in this study do significantly better on both the state standardized tests in English language arts and math, than do their non-immersion counterparts, irrespective of their race, grade, gender, or their school's poverty status. Moreover, the more time spent in a French immersion program, the greater the level of academic achievement. This is especially true in English language arts, suggesting a link between learning a foreign language and doing well in one's native language. On closer examination, we discovered that French immersion had a differential effect on academic achievement, returning significantly

Moreover, the more time spent in a French immersion program, the greater the level of academic achievement.

greater dividends in schools with higher levels of poverty. Once again, the pay off was greater in English than in math. Since these programs do not intentionally select on student SES, and since French immersion students in poor schools are themselves more likely to be poor, this is a significant finding. This finding becomes even more singular when we see that average scores of African American immersion students in high poverty schools are actually higher than those of African American immersion students in low poverty schools. This is counterintuitive, and will require more investigation on our part to adequately answer. We also see that in high poverty schools, the influence of French immersion on test scores rivals the influence of race, and is second only to grade level in predicting math scores. This is an important finding, especially given the strong association between race and achievement test scores in Louisiana (Caldas & Bankston, 1998).

Why this academic boost? Some research suggests that multilinguals may actually have more highly developed cognitive abilities than monolinguals (Ben-Zeev, 1977; Bialystok, 1988; Caldas & Caron-Caldas, 1997; Diaz, 1983; Hakuta, 1986; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; and Peal & Lambert, 1962), though some point out that the research is not conclusive (Jarvis, Danks, & Merriman, 1995). Since those in French immersion programs spend much of their school days together, creating their own mutually reinforcing peer environments, the individual-level cognitive boost from French immersion could be magnified at the group level, providing an antidote to the poverty level of the rest of their school peers.

. . . French immersion had . . . significantly greater dividends in schools with higher levels of poverty.

Table 5. Standardized Regression Coefficients with Standard Errors (in parentheses) of French Immersion and Control Variable Effects on Academic Achievement: By School Poverty Status

	Low Poverty Schools		High Poverty Schools	
	Lang. Arts	Math	Lang. Arts	Math
French Immersion	.122*** (.015)	.085*** (.018)	.177*** (.025)	.126*** (.024)
Poorest	-.223*** (.031)	-.142*** (.038)	-.187*** (.100)	-.041 (.094)
Race	-.171*** (.946)	-.147*** (1.16)	-.165*** (1.10)	-.130*** (1.03)
School Grade	.136*** (.180)	-.447*** (.221)	.090* (.331)	-.577*** (.312)
Gender	.077** (.574)	-.013 (.707)	.072* (1.00)	.001 (.946)
Adjusted R^2	.106***	.288***	.107***	.415***
N	1245	1245	696	696

*< .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

We are cautiously optimistic that our research could have important implications for helping raise the academic achievement levels of both African American and white students in high poverty schools. Based on our findings, we suggest that school officials may want to explore the possibility of recruiting more low SES students for language immersion programs. Our findings suggest that in poor schools immersion programs may have even greater potential for raising achievement in the student's first language (e.g., English), even though he/she spends more time in classrooms where learning is taking place in a second language. We advise caution though, as the strength of our findings is somewhat moderate and suggests that more research in the area of foreign language immersion, academic achievement, and school poverty is warranted. If our results can be replicated elsewhere, it would lend support to our findings that students in foreign language immersion programs housed in high poverty schools may benefit in two ways: they may not only have higher achievement levels in their native language, but they learn to fluently speak a second language as well, with all the attendant benefits of being bilingual. Given the great consternation among educators over the poor academic performance of low SES students, and low SES schools, foreign language immersion programs may offer school districts another alternative to address the negative academic consequences of poverty.

. . . foreign language immersion programs may offer school districts another alternative to address the negative academic consequences of poverty.

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NNELL Election Results

NNELL has played a critical role in establishing a voice and force for the early language movement.

We are happy to announce that Carine M. Feyten, associate professor of foreign language education and chair of the secondary education department at the University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, has been elected second vice-president for a three-year term, and Lori Langer de Ramirez, second language chair, Herricks Public Schools, Long Island, New York, has been elected to serve as secretary for a two-year term.

Carine Feyten

Carine is originally from Belgium and is fluent in five languages. She teaches undergraduate, masters, and doctorate-level courses in foreign language, teacher education, and second language acquisition. She has been involved in teacher preparation in K–12 and post-secondary levels for over ten years. She has been an active advocate for early language learning and piloted one of the first elementary foreign language methods courses in the state of Florida. She has published extensively in the area of K–12 teacher preparation, second language acquisition, and technology. Carine was the NNELL Regional Representative for the Southern Conference region, and the 1998 chair of the Teacher Development Special Interest Group for the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, past president of the Florida Foreign Language Association, and the founder of Suncoast Academic Alliance in Florida in Foreign Languages and Literatures.

In a statement to the organization upon her nomination, Carine stated that she believes that early language learning is finally coming of age. She noted that the field has been steadily gaining momentum and recognition over the last several years as the research community, together with practitioners in the field, have been refining what we know about best practices and optimum conditions for early language acquisition. Carine believes, however, that as we enter the new millennium there are still many unanswered questions related to the issues of teacher preparation, teacher burnout, the role of technology in instruction, etc. She notes that, "NNELL has played a critical role in establishing a voice and force for the early language movement. Today, in times of rapid change, the dynamic responsiveness of our organization to these questions and to the needs of our constituency is essential." Carine is honored to serve as an officer, to contribute to the energies of the "wonderful and nurturing people who are active in NNELL," and to help take the organization to a new era.

Lori Langer de Ramirez

Lori has been teaching for eight years, and has taught Spanish to grades 5–12, French to seventh graders, and ESL to adults. She has served as coordinator of a FLES and middle school program and is currently chair of second languages for a public school district on Long Island. Lori holds a master's degree in applied linguistics from Queens College and a doctorate in curriculum and teaching from Teachers College, Columbia University, where she also teaches as an adjunct professor of education. She has presented numerous workshops at state and national conferences. She has been the recipient of several National Endowment for the Humanities grants (to study in Mexico, Colombia, and Senegal), an American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese fellowship for graduate study, and a grant from the Council for Basic Education. Her areas of interest in teaching and research are literature in the language classroom, especially stories from the oral tradi-

tion, and content-based methodology. She has served NNELL for the past two years in the capacity of secretary and was nominated to run for a second term.

In her nomination statement, Lori noted that linguists have long debated the existence of what is called a "critical period." The earlier a child begins to learn a language, the more successful he or she will be at acquiring it fully. The brain is, in effect, prewired (as Noam Chomsky posits) for the reception of grammar information at an early age. To Lori, these facts have been supported in her experience in teaching young children. She notes that, "these energetic, appreciative, and excited students are gifted with the ability to absorb every bit of Spanish I can throw their way. Together we explore language as a means of sharing ideas, feelings, and philosophies of a culture. Through a foreign language, our perception of the world has been transformed and broadened. This is one of the reasons why I love to teach young students. They are open to language as communication, language as play, and language as life. And once they get going, there's no limit to what they can learn."

As secretary for NNELL, Lori will continue to work in support of early language education and, in this way, she hopes to give back some of what she has been given by her students. She has enjoyed the opportunity to serve as an important part of NNELL which, in Lori's opinion, has done so much already to promote awareness of early language learning.

"We should begin teaching foreign languages in our elementary schools. . ."

On September 15, 1999, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley delivered his Annual Back-to-School Address, entitled "Changing the American High School to Fit Modern Times." In it, Riley focused on our need to update the role of high schools in our changing society and improving the education and training of our teachers. He stressed high achievement by high school students through tougher core courses, mandatory exit exams, and the study of a foreign language. Among his comments was the following:

> *I believe that in this new economy every high school student should be close to fluent in a foreign language when he or she graduates. We should begin teaching foreign languages in our elementary schools, and then in middle schools and high schools. English is a beautiful language and every American student must be a master of it. English is surely a world language. But learning a foreign language exposes young people to new cultures and new horizons and helps them understand English better.*
>
> — Richard W. Riley

Introductory Note: Tara Gentry participated in the NNELL summer conference through a scholarship provided by the National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center at Iowa State University. Tara, who is a junior and is preparing to teach K–12 Spanish, was asked to write a newspaper article about the conference that would provide publicity for NNELL and stimulate interest in early language learning. She wrote the following article, which was sent to conference participants who were NNELL state and regional reps. They requested that the article be published in their local newspapers.—The Editor.

Meet a Foreign Language Advocate

Tara Gentry
Student
Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

You don't know Joe.

You don't know that in third grade Joe started learning Spanish daily in his elementary school and that four years later he began Russian in junior high.

. . . Joe can now confidently communicate in both languages, despite being hearing impaired from birth.

You don't know that Joe can now confidently communicate in both languages, despite being hearing impaired from birth. Nor do you know that he accredits much of his success to his elementary Spanish teachers, saying that their enthusiasm pushed him to enjoy foreign languages and to want to learn more.

Nor do you know that Joe Kiebesh is a 1999 valedictorian of Georgetown University.

Kiebesh was the keynote speaker for the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL) conference "Advocacy, Articulation, and Curriculum Development," sponsored by Glastonbury Public School District at the University of Hartford in Connecticut July 10–12.

The school district in Glastonbury, a middle-class Hartford suburb of 28,000 people, is unique in offering a K–12 foreign language program since the 1950s.

All first through fifth grade students study Spanish, and in grade six, students can elect to switch to the study of French. In grade seven, students may add Russian and in grade nine, Latin. Nine years ago the opportunity was instituted to begin Japanese in kindergarten at a magnet school operated with East Hartford, Connecticut. At Glastonbury High School, Japanese is also offered through two-way interactive television with area high schools and Manchester Community Technical College. The average per-pupil expenditure annually in the Glastonbury school district is $7,415.

As a result of the grant from the Foreign Language Assistance Program to the Glastonbury Public Schools for advocacy and curriculum development for K–12 foreign language education, 70 people, including state and regional reps from the National Network of Early Language Learning, attended the invitational NNELL conference. Among them was [NNELL state or regional rep's name and his/her position in NNELL were inserted here]. The National Network for Early Language Learning is dedicated to the promotion of foreign language instruction for all students, kindergarten through eighth grade, supports articulated programs, and works for the improvement of public awareness and support for early language learning.

Many ask out of curiosity, "Why isn't high school enough?" Perhaps you had a brief encounter with foreign

language in high school from which all you remember are the endless lists of conjugated verbs and fixed expressions such as *"¿Dónde está el baño?"*

It takes more than the national average of two years to develop proficiency in a second language. The emphasis in today's foreign language education is on starting early and continuing study for many years to build communication skills in the language and cultural competence. Studies suggest that the practical advantages of foreign language proficiency include increased job opportunities, cultural awareness, enhanced ability to communicate in English, higher standardized test scores, and increased self-esteem, not to mention recently recognized cognitive advantages, especially when there is an early start to language learning.

The Glastonbury Public Schools have demonstrated the commitment to long-sequence programs, and the proof of their success rests in the proficiency of students who have graduated from the program. Joe Kiebesh is great evidence that early language learning should be made available for all students in K–8 because all will be citizens in an increasingly globalized world.

Kiebesh summed up the appeal of the NNELL conference powerfully at his keynote's close:

> Foreign languages, and deep understanding of the respective cultures, open a link to other countries and enable us to build better political, corporate, and personal relationships. However, they cannot just be high school or college requirements. It is important to start at the elementary school level and to make them living and useful, not simply words on a page in a textbook. Beginning a foreign language early gives students many, many more advantages.

If you would like to find out more about supporting early language learning in your community, contact [NNELL state or regional rep's name and address were inserted here] or check out the following websites: National Network for Early Language Learning: www.educ.iastate.edu/nnell, or the Center for Applied Linguistics' Ñandutí, Early Foreign Language Learning: www.cal.org/earlylang.

Excerpts from Joe Kiebesh's Keynote Speech at the NNELL Summer Conference

I am a hearing-impaired person. What does that mean?

- It is very difficult to comprehend what is going on while watching Univision.
- I was the favorite target of a phonetics teacher in Russia when she made me repeat difficult Russian words several times so that I would be able to pronounce them to her liking.
- I got remarks in Russia such as, "you speak terribly," because what I thought I said was not what the other person heard.

I could easily have had college foreign language requirements waived because of a "disability."

My hearing loss could have been a strong incentive not to learn one, and certainly not two, foreign languages. However, my experiences with my elementary school Spanish teachers pushed me to enjoy foreign languages and to want to learn more. Their enthusiasm and desire to teach started me on a path that has created the person I am today.

My hearing loss could have been a strong incentive not to learn one, and certainly not two, foreign languages.

Who am I besides simply a hearing-impaired person?

I am a 1999 graduate of Georgetown University's School of

Foreign Service and have been involved in numerous activities in college. I was a resident assistant for two years in a freshman dorm. I volunteered at the Coast Guard Historian's Office. I have been to Russia twice and will be going to Mexico for the second time next week. . . . I am also the product of Glastonbury's public school system and its foreign language program. The early opportunities to learn languages have given me a comprehensive background that has given me an edge over many of my college classmates.

. . . Why would anyone bother teaching elementary school students a foreign language if they can elect to study it in middle and high school?

Starting early allows students to gain a better grasp of the language. To use a personal example: Glastonbury's language program perhaps prepared me too well for college. I was placed in a second-year Russian class (although I could have gone into third-year Russian) and easily made it through the Russian classes offered. Another Glastonbury High School student was in the same Russian classes with me for several years in college. We could not help thinking about how our classes at Glastonbury were harder and more challenging than the ones in college. When I studied in St. Petersburg for the summer, I was placed in the highest-level class offered (which had four graduate students in it). . . .

Even though I had not studied Spanish since a senior in high school, I was able to remember a surprising amount when I went to Mexico over Christmas break to do community service work. I was able to speak confidently and "hang out" with our counterparts in Mexico despite the fact I did not study Spanish in college. Several of my friends asked me where I had learned Spanish. When I told them I started in third grade, they thought I had gone to a private school.

This early, continuous, and rewarding study of a foreign language can bring even more benefits besides allowing students to have a comprehensive background. At the university level, this allows for many more opportunities for research, volunteering, and learning that they would not have otherwise had. Learning a language at only the high school and university levels can give a basic background. But, continuous study since elementary school gives students the opportunity to understand much more because it is more firmly imprinted in their minds.

Here are some examples: I wrote a paper on aids to navigation in Russia under Peter the Great and was able to use several Russian and Polish sources. . . . I also completed a senior project on illicit drugs in Peru and was able to include Spanish-language documents from the Peruvian government and NGOs: I was not limited to obviously biased U.S. government reports. . . . When I go there [to Mexico] next week I will have an advantage over my professor because he does not know Spanish. Now that I am looking for a job, I am using my international affairs and foreign language background to the fullest. Not only is this listed on my resume, but it features prominently in my cover letter. I am not limited to simply English and can prove to possible employers that I may have an edge over other applicants. The world is much more interdependent and a strong knowledge of international affairs and at least one foreign language is crucial. When applying to places such as the National Institutes of Health, Drug Enforcement Agency, and other private and government agencies, I make sure I stress these points. In addition, even for jobs in the United States, this ability is a plus since not everyone speaks English.

Now that I am looking for a job, I am using my international affairs and foreign language background to the fullest.

These early opportunities to learn Spanish and Russian gave me a distinct advantage over those who either did not know the languages or who started them in high school or college. I had the fortune of being able

to start in elementary school. . . .

It is easy to live in a world dominated by American English and the American culture and forget that about 95% of the world's population does not live in the United States. Foreign languages and a deep understanding of the respective cultures open a link to other countries and enable us to build better political, corporate, and personal relationships. They are also critical in being able to help, and work with, people in the United States who do not know English. However, foreign languages cannot just be a high school or college requirement. It is important to start at the elementary school level and to make the languages living and useful, not simply words on a page in a textbook. Beginning a foreign language early gives students many, many advantages.

Apply for a Grant for Your Program!

The Joint National Committee for Languages–National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL–NCLIS) invites you to use its Web site, www.languagepolicy.org, to find out about grant possibilities for your school district. To find grant information on the Web site, which is constantly updated, use the "Grants" button.

In the near future JNCL–NCLIS expects information on the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP), a grant program of interest to school districts that have or are planning an elementary school foreign language program, for the year 2000 to become available. As soon as it is, it will be posted on their Web site.

In 1999, approximately $6,000,000 was awarded in the FLAP grant competition, for which grants were due February 23, 1999. In 2000, this amount will be increased to $8,000,000. The average award for school districts in 1999 was estimated at $105,000 and the range of awards was $35,000–$170,000. For 1999, 54 awards were granted. To find out which school districts received FLAP awards in 1999, contact JNCL–NCLIS at info@languagepolicy.org.

The description of the Foreign Language Assistance Program for 1999, which is expected to remain the same for 2000, follows:

The program provides discretionary grants to local education agencies to pay for the federal share of the cost of innovative model programs that establish, improve, or expand foreign language study for elementary and secondary school students. The program also provides grants to state education agencies that promote systemic approaches to improving foreign language learning in the state.

Stay informed about FLAP and other grants and help your school district receive funding to carry out innovative initiatives to begin a new elementary school foreign language program or enhance an ongoing one.

For more information contact JNCL–NCLIS, 4646 40th St., NW, Suite 310, Washington, DC 20016-1859; 202-966-8477; Fax: 202-966-8310; E-mail: info@languagepolicy.org; Web site: http://www.languagepolicy.org.

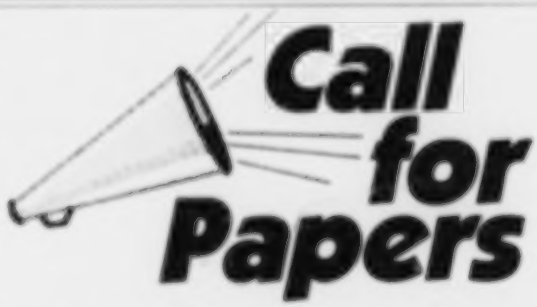
In Memoriam

Several weeks ago, the National Network for Early Language Learning received the sad news that a long-time friend, Jane Graveen, passed away after a short battle with cancer.

In 1949, Jane began her education career at Miami University, where she studied Spanish and education. After receiving her bachelor's degree, she enrolled at the University of Wisconsin to obtain her master's degree. Upon completing her master's, Jane taught Spanish at the secondary level in Wisconsin, New Jersey, and Connecticut. In 1981, Jane went to Glastonbury and began teaching foreign language in the elementary school. Jane became a lead teacher for the language program in 1989 and remained so until her retirement in 1996.

From 1983 to her retirement, Jane held positions on several education boards, including Public Relations Chair for the National Network for Early Language Learning, Secretary for COLT (Connecticut Language Teachers Association), and Newsletter Editor for COLT. In 1990, she received a Connecticut Celebration of Excellence Award for her classroom creativity.

Jane has done so much for elementary school foreign language learning that her memory and enthusiasm will never be forgotten. Although the work that she began will be carried on, Jane Graveen will be greatly missed in the profession.



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Updated Resource Information

In the Spring 1999 issue (Volume 4, Number 3) of *Learning Languages*, please update the ordering information for the Spanish materials described on page 31, *Cantemos con los niños hispanos* Series (Vol. I *¿Dónde vas, Carbonerito?*, Vol. II *Amapolas y Patitos*, Vol. III *Arroz con Leche)*: Grupo Cañaveral, Inc.; P.O. Box 521866; Miami, FL 33152; 305-480-0022; 888-226-8273; Fax: 305-480-0023; E-mail: info@hispanicmusic.com; Web sites: http:/www.hispanicmusic.com; http://www.grupocanaveral.com; http://www.josemarti.org.

Integrating Foreign Language and Science through Technology

Marcia J. Pastorek with Lisa Craig
Trinity Episcopal School
New Orleans, Louisiana

Integrating any area of the curriculum with technology in a meaningful way takes time and patience. Integrating two distinct areas of the curriculum with technology takes much more time and much more patience. The results, however, can be awesome. Both teachers and students reap immeasurable rewards.

Reinforcing Science in French

This special project began as a simple integration of French and science in a lower-school setting (grades 1–4) through collaboration between Lisa, the science coordinator, and me, the French coordinator. I had been teaching the body parts (head, shoulders, knees, and toes) in French in the first grade when, in the teachers' lounge, I heard Lisa talking about recording body sounds (hearts, stomachs) in the first grade. After discussing the possibilities for collaboration, we decided to teach a class together. The start of the project was challenging since Lisa knew no French and I had very little knowledge of science, but our persistence won out and we taught our first integrated lesson on the human body.

As we reflected on our shared lesson, we realized that we could combine efforts and team-teach French and science. So my "body parts" lesson grew to include heart, lungs, brain, etc., and a French color game dealing with the blood flow evolved. The digestive system, the brain, and the senses also became topics for our shared unit. To prepare my lessons I looked at Lisa's lesson plans and simplified them, modified them, and taught the lessons in French. The students became very excited about these lessons, which reinforced and extended their science lessons.

The time arrived when Lisa and I wanted to try teaching a more extensive French-science lesson together. We arranged to have a long afternoon class for this project. First, we had students draw exact replicas of their bodies by lying down on butcher paper and having a partner trace their outline. They then drew the main organs on their paper bodies in varied colors. We then gave them mailing labels on which were written the French words for the organs and told them to place the labels on the appropriate organs; for example, they placed *le coeur* on the heart. Later the students added hair, eyes, etc., in order to personalize their life-sized figures. These figures made a wonderful French and science display in the library.

As the weeks turned into months, Lisa and I began looking for additional science activities that could be taught in French. Some of the lessons we designed include nutrition, planets, properties of matter, insects, light and sound, and the water cycle.

The students became very excited about these lessons, which reinforced and extended their science lessons.

Integrating French, Science, and Technology

We arrived at the day when we were ready for a bigger challenge. What to do next? We decided that

We decided that creating a project using technology would add a new learning dimension for students . . .

creating a project using technology would add a new learning dimension for students, but we knew that the type of technology used had to be geared to the elementary school level. We decided to work with the second grade curriculum and began to develop a project that integrated French, science, and technology. In order to secure sufficient time for the classes, the support of fellow teachers and administrators was important to us. It was not difficult, however, to enlist their support since research suggests the importance of project-based learning (Buck, 1999; Gardner, 1993; ISTE, 1999; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998).

Since the second graders had become acquainted with animal habitats and animal adaptations during their science classes in first grade, we chose these topics as the focus of the project. We held several planning sessions in order to develop a detailed outline of the project. It was evident that other areas of the curriculum, such as social studies and language arts, would also be a natural part of the project. Once we had developed complete and clear procedures, we were ready to begin the project.

The following are the steps students completed in the project:

1. Heard the French teacher read *The Mixed-up Chameleon* by Eric Carle in French and discussed the story both in English and French.
2. Discussed in English the idea of what a defenseless animal is with the assistance of both teachers.
3. Learned French for key vocabulary terms.
4. Drew a defenseless animal on paper.
5. Shared their pictures with the class and named their animals in either English or French.
6. Drew pictures of their defenseless animals on the computers using KidPix Deluxe.
7. Saved two copies of each picture in their files.
8. Received official assignments (ambassador, consul, etc.) to a Francophone country and discussed these assignments in English.
9. Used globes and atlases (both English and French) assisted by the teachers to find the location of their assigned Francophone countries.
10. Discussed (first in English, then in French) the continents, weather, habitats, flora, and fauna of these countries.
11. Grouped themselves according to assigned countries and answered questions in English about the weather, habitat, and characteristics of the animals that live in each country. Later, with teacher assistance, answered similar simple questions in French.
12. Created a list of defenses animals would need to survive in their new environment. Learned the names for these defenses in French, for example, a sticky tongue, *une langue collante*.
13. Packed a suitcase with all the defenses an animal would need for a trip to the Francophone country. They drew the suitcases on KidPix and drew the defenses inside the suitcases. All the defenses were labeled in English and French.
14. Worked on the second saved copy of their animal and drew on it the defenses they had chosen to take along.
15. Drew the new habitat around the adapted animal.

We then placed all the students' works into a slide show using KidPix. There were three slides for each student: 1) defenseless animal, 2) packed suitcase, 3) new adapted animal. We worked with the students to help them chose the desired transitions and sound effects for each set of slides. Students individually recorded a brief comment about their slides onto the slide show.

That could have been the end of the project but we decided to take the project one step further. For this final step we used the program Quick

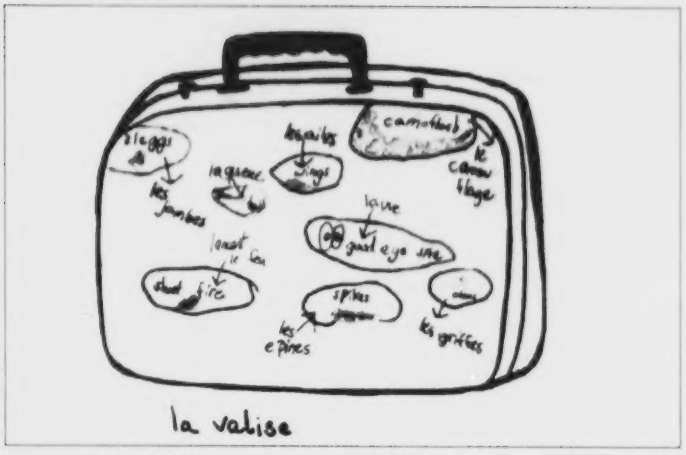

Figure 1. La valise

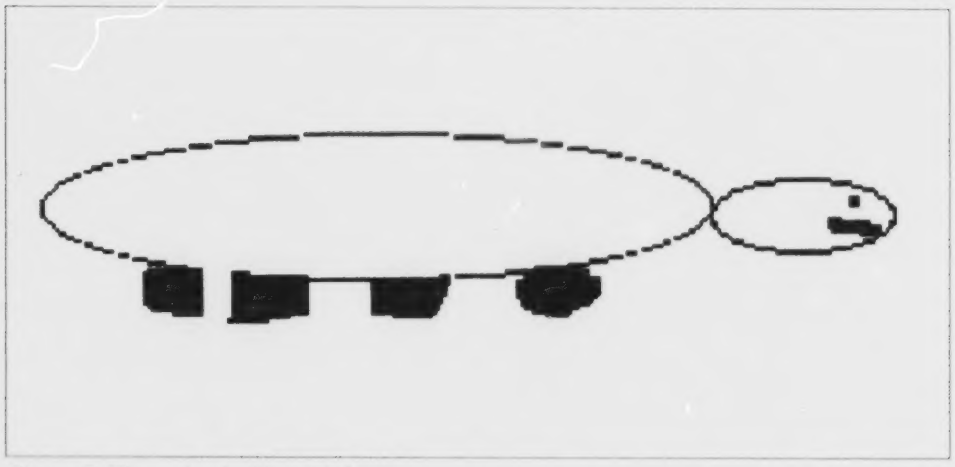

Figure 2. The animal without defenses

Figure 3. The animal with the following defenses: claws, shell, spikes, color change, eye shades, and "venom teeth"

Drawings are by Andrew K. Tyler, Grade 3; Marcia Pastorek, French Teacher

Morph 1.1 by Broderbund to show on the computer screen the animals morphing from defenseless to adapted. To complete this final step, we:

1. Took the picture of each defenseless animal and placed it in Quick Morph under picture one.
2. Took the picture of each adapted animal and placed it in Quick Morph under picture two.
3. Selected the option that creates a movie.

By connecting the computer to the TV with a video adapter, students were able to watch their animals morphing. Some of the students chose to add a voice-over both in English and French. We then presented the slide show and the movie to the students and their parents at a special presentation.

Conclusions

This project was certainly something the students will not soon forget. Although much time and patience were required, the results were outstanding. Ultimately we decided that the journey itself had been the final reward, not just for the students but also for the teachers. Examples of this project may be viewed at http://www.trinityno.com. On the menu at this site, select "Classes" then "Lower School" and "Frience"—the term we created to indicate a science lesson taught in French.

Ultimately we decided that the journey itself had been the final reward, not just for the students but also for the teachers.

References

Buck Institute for Education. (1999). *Project based learning*. Novato, CA. Retrieved October 18, 1999 from the World Wide Web: http://www.bie.org/pbl.

Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple intelligences: The theory in practice*. New York: Basic Books, Harper Collins Publishers.

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). (1999). Research projects. Eugene, OR. Retrieved on October 18,1999, from the World Wide Web: http://www.iste.org/Research/index.html.

Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (1998). *Understanding by design*. Alexandria, VA: The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

For more information, contact Marcia J. Pastorek, Trinity Episcopal School, 1315 Jackson Ave., New Orleans, LA 70130-5199; mpastorek@trinityno.com or Lisa Craig, lcraig@trinityno.com.

Congratulations, Virginia!

The Joint National Committee for Language included the article "Advocacy for Early Language Education: School Board Presentation" by Virginia Gramer (*Learning Languages* 4[3], Spring 1999, pp. 4–8) in the September 1999 mailing to all JNCL-NCLIS members. In an accompanying letter, J. David Edwards, Executive Director, called the article "superb."

A Page from NNELL's Photo Album: The 1999 Summer Conference

Glastonbury, Connecticut

Joe Kiebesh, keynote speaker for the conference, with his parents

Christy Brown addresses conference participants

Incoming president, Myriam Met (center), *and other participants listen to a conference speaker*

Activities for Your Classroom

Fruit and the Five Senses

Audray K. Weber
Cushing Elementary
Kettle Moraine School District
Delafield, Wisconsin

Context:
This science unit teaches about the five senses, provides practice in math skills (preparation and interpretation of graphs, counting and comparisons), teaches about cultural products (unfamiliar tropical fruit), as it enhances Spanish language skills. The unit, which requires at least three 30-minute class periods, was designed to be taught in Spanish to students in an early elementary program (kindergarten through third grade).

Objectives:
At the end of this unit the students will be able to:

1. Name the five senses and tell the information the five senses give us.
2. Identify familiar and unfamiliar fruit by color, size, and shape.
3. Express whether they like or dislike the taste of each fruit.
4. Graph their favorite fruits.
5. Work together to create sentences that interpret a graph of fruits.

Targeted Standards:

Communication

1.1 Interpersonal Communication. Students provide and obtain information about the fruits and the senses.

1.2 Interpretive Communication. Students understand and interpret oral questions and commands and written information on graphs.

Cultures

2.2 Products and Perspectives of Culture. Students learn about fruits common in tropical climates.

Connections

3.1 Making Connections. Students reinforce and further their knowledge of fruits, the senses, and graphing through the foreign language.

Materials:

1. World map.
2. Various plastic fruit and/or pictures of fruit.
3. Supplied by the students: various common fruits such as pears, cherries, oranges, lemons, raspberries, strawberries, watermelon, bananas, grapes, pineapple, kiwi; tropical fruits that are not so common, such as papaya, guava, and mango.
4. Knife, cutting board, platters, large bowl, napkins, paper plates, paper cups, and wet and dry dish cloths for quick clean up.
5. Large piece of butcher paper with blank graph drawn on it.
6. Reusable shower curtain with a graph grid drawn on it with black permanent marker.
7. Markers, paper cutouts of fruits, and glue stick or masking tape.

Procedure:

Day One

Using the plastic fruit or fruit pictures ask students to name the color and size of each fruit. Ask them if they

have ever tasted the fruit and if they like its taste. Begin with just a few fruits at first and when students demonstrate understanding, add others until all the common fruits are introduced. Next, introduce fruits grown in tropical climates. On the map show some of the Central American countries where these fruits are grown. Using a Venn Diagram, have students sort the fruit into different categories, such as fruit with/without seeds, circular/not circular shape, big/small, grows on a tree/vine/plant, etc.

Send a letter home to parents to tell them that during the next class period students will be learning about fruit and the five senses. Ask parents to send one or two common as well as uncommon fruits to use in the lesson. Explain that the students will share and eat the fruit when the lesson is done. Also ask for parent helpers for the next two class periods.

Day Two

Graph fruit that students bring to class by having them place it on the shower curtain graph (e.g. all apples go in the squares of the "apple" row). Have students help title and label the graph. Ask students to tell you about the graph. To help them, ask questions such as "How many pineapples do we have? How many more apples than lemons are there? Do we have any pears? How many fruit do we have in all?" Record these responses for the students to see.

Cut one of the fruits into bite-sized pieces while you talk to the students about the size of the fruit, its color, and shape. Describe its texture as hard/soft and its taste as sweet/sour. Tell students whether you like its taste. Tell them where the fruit grows and how it grows. After you have cut the first fruit, have a student give a piece to each student. Use commands to tell students how to help, "Mary, stand up and pass out the napkins, please." Tell students not to eat the fruit yet. As you continue describing and cutting fruit, have parent helpers or students pass

it out. Count the fruits you cut up. Review by asking students to point to the fruits on their plate that you describe.

To begin a review of the five senses, have students point to their eyes and tell them to look at the fruit with their eyes. Ask them what they see. Next have students point to their nose. Tell students to smell the fruit with their eyes closed and raise their hands if they can smell the lemon/banana/watermelon. Now have students touch the fruit with their eyes closed. Can they find by touch alone the banana/papaya/apple? Ask them which fruits are hard/soft. Tell students to listen to the fruit with their ears. Of course, they can not hear anything. Have students eat the fruit and listen as they eat to find out if they can hear differences in sounds as the fruits are chewed. Also remind them to think about what the fruit tastes like: "Is it sweet/sour? Do you like the taste?"

As students help you clean up, continue talking about the fruit. Tell them how many fruits you have left over. Name the fruits as you put them into a bag. Ask the students about the color, size, and shape of the fruit they are viewing.

Have students eat the fruit and listen as they eat to find out if they can hear differences in sounds as the fruits are chewed.

Day Three

Using the butcher paper graph, have students pick a paper picture of their favorite fruit and tape or glue it onto the graph. After this is done, encourage

students to tell you about the graph by asking: "Which fruit was the class favorite? How many students picked it? What was the least favorite? Did anyone pick it? How many students picked apples and pears as their favorite? How many more picked bananas than papayas?" Record the responses to these questions on the bottom of the graph.

Pointing to the parts of the body, ask the students questions about what we do with each of the five senses. Write on chart paper: *Con nuestros ojos vemos. Con nuestras orejas escuchamos. Con nuestros dedos tocamas. Con nuestras narices olemos. Con nuestras bocas gustamos.* (With our eyes we see. With our ears we hear. With our fingers we touch. With our nose we smell. With our mouth we taste.) Illus-trate, or have students illustrate, each with a picture of the related body part.

Do a Gouin series (Curtain & Pesola, 1994, p. 111) about making a fruit salad. Have students make a pretend fruit salad with hand motions as you go through the Gouin. Afterward, give each student a paper cup of the real fruit salad to enjoy. (Before class, ask parents to help you clean and cut up the leftover fruit to be used in a fruit salad.)

Assessment:

Provide each student with a written copy of the writing used on Day Three describing what we do with each of the five senses. Have students draw a picture of the body part referred to for each sense. Collect the papers and check for understanding. When you return the papers to students, have them place the papers in their Spanish portfolios.

References:

Curtain, H., & Pesola, C.A. (1994). *Languages and children: Making the match.* White Plains, NY: Longman.

European Union Wants People to Be Trilingual

The following news was released by the Associated Press and published in many of the nation's newspapers on October 20, 1999:

The European Commission has declared 2000 the "European Year of Languages" as part of a drive to encourage all residents to speak at least two languages besides their own.

"The ability to speak one or more foreign languages opens up new opportunities for Europeans," said Viviane Reding, the European Union's commissioner for culture, education, and sport.

Reding said learning more languages would enable citizens to take advantage of their right to live and work in any of the 15 EU nations as enshrined in the Union's founding charter.

Reding said $13.8 million was available for the language campaign.

Classroom Resources

French

Tibo, G., & Tremblay, S. (1996). *Le dodo des animaux*. Québec: Héritage Jeunesse.

Available from Sosnowski Language Resources, 58 Sears Road, Wayland, MA 01778; 800-437-7161; Fax: 508-358-6687. Cost is $8.95 for paperback and $16.95 for hardbound.

This fantasy book explores how animals might get a good night's sleep. The author invents a different setting for each animal: the giraffe needs many pillows to support its head, mice sleep on bunk beds, the lion sleeps—still wearing its crown—on a royal bed. Although the text is probably too difficult for young American learners, the illustrations lend themselves to imaginative language. Children six through eight years old will find the pictures intriguing and can use their imagination to invent their own text.

German

Delafosse, C., & Grant, D. (1994). *Meyers Kleine Kinderbibliothek*. Mannheim: Brockhaus AG.

Available through International Book Import Service, Inc., 161 Main St., PO Box 8188, Lynchburg, TN 37352-8188; 800-277-4247 or 931-759-7400; Fax: 931-759-7555; E-mail: ibis@ibiservice.com; www.ibiservice.com.

The popular *First Discovery Books*, published by Scholastic, Inc., have been translated into German and are published by Brockhaus AG under the title of *Meyers Kleine Kinderbibliothek*. These little books are a favorite among first and second graders who are learning German. The books address many varied science topics in simple language. Between each page is a see-through plastic page, that allows students to see phenomena "before and after." Topics included in the series of books are eggs, weather, lady bugs, colors, cars, under-the-ground, elephants, airplanes, a knight's castle, flowers, birds, apples, mice, houses, ships, farms, dinosaurs, rivers, honey bees, jungles, big and small, trees, the circus, tools, and numbers. The books are extremely well-suited for research of school topics addressed in the first and second grade curriculum. The *Meyers Kleine Kinderbibliothek* discovery books are very helpful as a classroom resource and lower elementary students will enjoy reading them.

Latin

Sweet, W. E. (1996). *Artes Latinae* (Text). CD-ROM version, Lyon, J. and Sonkowsky, R. P. Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci.

Available from Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc., 1000 Brown St., Unit 101, Wauconda, IL 60084; 847-526-4344; Fax: 847-526-2867; E-mail: latin@bolchazy.com. Cost is $212 plus shipping for the CD-ROM for Level 1 or $270 plus shipping for the complete Level 1 set.

As early language learning programs become more prevalent and qualified teachers become more difficult to find, the option of Latin as a

second language emerges as a viable option, not only for school districts but also for home schoolers. This CD-ROM version of Waldo Sweet's popular *Artes Latinae* approach to learning Latin provides an easy-to-follow course that is suited to students age 10 and above. The course uses programmed instruction, which generates continuous, active response on the part of the student. This material is particularly appealing to home schoolers because a highly motivated and capable student can follow the program without the supervision of a qualified Latin teacher. The methodology of the original text by Sweet was designed to break the learning process down into bite-sized bits and structure it carefully according to a system of continuous spiraling of content and feedback to the student. A student who progresses successfully through the two disks will have a solid command of the basics of Latin, roughly the equivalent of two years of high school Latin.

Users of the CD-ROM version must have an IBM compatible computer (or a Power Mac with SoftWindows 3.0), Windows 3.1 or later, a CD-ROM drive, sound capability, and a VGA monitor. Planned upgrades include Medieval Latin pronunciation (American Scholastic and Restored Classical are available now), ability to record the user's pronunciation for comparison with the author's, glossary, electronic version of the graded reader, and electronic version of the cultural filmstrips. A Macintosh version is also planned. Free demo disks may be requested from the publisher.

While basic in its blackline drawings and stark text, this CD-ROM version of *Artes Latinae* is a great start for interactive instructional materials that will help provide individualized programs for independent study, remediation, or multilevel classes.

Guest Reviewer for Latin Resources: *Marty Abbott, Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax, Virginia*

Spanish

Johnson, J., Morigaki, K., & Smith, J. E. (1998). *¡Abrapalabra! Libro de palabras e imágenes.* Carmel, CA. Hampton-Brown Books.

Available from Hampton-Brown Books, Box 223220, Carmel, CA 93922; 800-333-3510. Cost is $40.00 for the big book, $8.00 for the small book, and $30.00 for the Teacher's Guide and Activity Card Pack.

¡Abrapalabra! Libro de palabras e imágenes is an excellent book of "pictures and images" (or picture dictionary) for grade PreK–4 students. This book is organized by themes, including: *los animales, los opuestos, el clima, ¿Cómo crecen?, día y noche, los números,* and *las casas.* Each page is clear, not too busy, and colorfully illustrated with photos or drawings that have a border indicating the theme along one edge. The book is available in a big book format and a small student book. The featured language is primarily vocabulary words and phrases. Often a question is posed at the top of the page, such as: *¿Dónde viven? ¿Qué hacen las familias? ¿Qué necesitan los perros?* The pages titled *Las cosechas* include illustrations of crops, as well as small photos of a wheat field, an orchard of oranges, a pumpkin patch, and a rice paddy. The *Las estaciones* pages ask *Es otoño, ¿dónde está Nico?* and show Nico in school (*en su asiento*) in *septiembre* and smelling the turkey (*en la cocina*) in *noviembre.* The *Las casas* pages are illustrated with photos of houses from around the world and their different purposes (*la casa transportable, las casas de adobe, el yurt, la carpa*). The labels under each animal *casero* also include some of the animal's attributes, *la tortuga/el caparazón; el loro/las plumas, la garra; la cola; el hampster/los bigotes.*

Also available as a companion to *¡Abrapalabra!* is a wonderful Teacher's Guide and Activity Card Pack. This set of 28 laminated cards measuring 8 1/2" x 11" contains activities to build vocabulary, language, and phonics skills. Each card extends one of the *¡Abrapalabra!* themes. Most of the activities ask the students to think critically as they complete a fun task. The cards have an illustration on the front and directions for the teacher on the back that suggest activities for vocabulary, language, and phonics. The *Los animales* card has photos of eight different animals on the front. The vocabulary activities ask the students to identify the animals on pages 2 and 3 of *¡Abrapalabra!* and to role-play their actions; find the animals with whiskers, tails, ears, and humps; and identify animals with specified characteristics (*grande, largo*) and describe them. Each activity suggests questions for the teacher to use: *¿Es esto un caimán? ¿Es esto un delfín? ¿El lobo tiene pezuñas? ¿Qué otros animales tienen pezuñas?*

The language section suggests playing a game called *¿Qué ves?* in which the students name the animals on the front of the card. Then the teacher or a student connects two animals with a Wikki Stix (wax strip) and asks, for example, *¿En qué se parecen el tigre al elefante? (Ambos tienen cuatro patas)* and *¿En qué no se parecen? (El elefante tiene trompa y el tigre no tiene trompa).* Finally, the phonics section asks the students to find animals whose names begin with certain letters; for example, "o" would be *oso polar.* Other students can then find other words that begin with "o" (*orejas, ojo*). And for the last activity the teacher asks the students to draw an *oso polar* using circles and to label body parts such as *las orejas* and *los ojos.*

The *Los bicharrachos* card shows the simple, labeled steps to make a spider out of an egg carton cup and a pipe cleaner, as well as a butterfly from a pipe cleaner with a piece of tissue paper. Activities include identifying which animal lives in webs, which animal is green with eight legs; writing animal riddles; and naming animals, *Eduardo el escarabajo y Ana la araña.* Other cards have activities such as a board game based on the city, using colors and shapes to make pictures, creating a *Loteria* game, making paper-bag puppets, filling a wheelbarrow with crops, and creating a cumulative story (*Yo soy el granjero Pablo. Tengo brocolí en mi caretilla.* Or *Yo soy la granjera Manuelita. Tengo trigo en mi caretilla,* etc.). Even more activities include filling an empty room with cards of furniture, and "dressing" a stuffed bear by naming the clothing it would wear in different types of weather. The phonics section progresses from initial vowel sounds to initial consonant sounds, to clapping out the number of syllables in words and finding other words with the same number of syllables.

With a little creativity, *¡Abrapalabra!*, along with the activity cards, could be used as a way to organize several years of the elementary school foreign language curriculum. These materials include basic vocabulary, nicely illustrated themes that are interesting to students, and activities that ask the students to think and create, using their language in meaningful ways. The *¡Abrapalabra!* materials would be a worthwhile addition to any existing program.

Calendar

Spring 2000 Conferences

February 24–26, 2000
Southern Conference on Language Teaching and Alabama Association of Foreign Language Teachers. Wynfrey Hotel at Riverchase Galleria, Birmingham, AL. Lynne McClendon, SCOLT Executive Director, 165 Lazy Laurel Chase, Roswell, GA 30076; 770-992-1256; Fax: 770-992-3464; E-mail: lynnemcc@mindspring.com.

March 10–13, 2000
Central States Conference-Cruise. San Juan, Puerto Rico. E-mail: rmcheatham@ualr.edu.

March 16–19, 2000
Southwest Conference on Language Teaching. Salt Lake City, UT. Audrey Cournia, 1348 Coachman Dr., Sparks, NV 89434; Fax: 702-358-1605; E-mail: Acournia@compuserve.com.

April 13–16, 2000
Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Washington, DC. Northeast Conference, Dickinson College, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; 717-245-1977; Fax: 717-245-1976; E-mail: nectfl@dickinson.

Summer 2000 Courses and Workshops

July 5–15, 2000
Temas Arlejos: Recurring Themes in Ancient, Colonial, and Modern Latin America. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu.

July 24–August 3, 2000
K–6 Foreign Languages: Leading the Way with Teacher Preparation. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu.

August 5–13, 2000
New Technologies in the Foreign Language Classroom. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu.

NNELL is an organization for educators involved in teaching foreign languages to children. The mission of the organization is to promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to their own. NNELL provides leadership, support, and service to those committed to early language learning and coordinates efforts to make language learning in programs of excellence a reality for all children.

NNELL works to accomplish this mission through activities that improve public awareness and support of early language learning. NNELL facilitates cooperation among organizations directly concerned with early language learning, facilitates communication among teachers, teacher educators, parents, program administrators, and policymakers, and disseminates information and guidelines to assist in developing programs of excellence.

NNELL holds its annual meeting at the fall conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Its officers are elected by members through a mail ballot election held annually in the spring.

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Learning Languages

The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning

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Learning Languages: The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning is the official publication of NNELL. It serves the profession by providing a medium for the sharing of information, ideas, and concerns among teachers, administrators, researchers, and others interested in the early learning of languages. The journal reflects NNELL's commitment to promoting opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language and culture in addition to their own. See the inside of the back cover for more information on NNELL.

In an effort to address the interests of the profession, both practical and scholarly articles are published. Practical articles describe innovative approaches to teaching and the administration of effective language programs for children. Scholarly articles report on original research and cite both current research and theory as a basis for making recommendations for practice. Scholarly articles are refereed, i.e., reviewed anonymously by at least three readers. Readers include members of the NNELL executive board, the editorial advisory board, and invited guest reviewers who have expertise in the area. Refereed articles are identified as such in the journal. Write to the editor to request a copy of author guidelines for preparing articles, or retrieve them from NNELL's website: www.educ.iastate.edu/nnell

Submissions: Deadlines are: fall issue—May 1; winter issue—Nov. 1; spring issue—Feb. 1. Articles, classroom activities, and materials may be submitted to the appropriate contributing editor (see below). Send announcements, conference information, and original children's work (such as line drawings, short stories, and poems) to the editor. Children's work needs to be accompanied by written permission from the child's parent or guardian and must include the child's name, age, school, and the teacher's name, address, and telephone (add fax and e-mail address, if available).

Submit a favorite classroom activity for the "Activities for Your Classroom" section by sending a description of the activity that includes title, context, objectives, targeted standards, materials, procedure, and assessment. Include pictures or drawings as illustration, if available. Send with your name, address, and phone number to the Classroom Activities editor listed below.

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Notes from the President

If no one has said this to you recently, please allow me:

Thank you, thank you, thank you! Thank you for being a teacher. Thank you for teaching foreign languages—something most of the public and even some of our own colleagues don't appreciate enough. Thank you for caring enough about the future of America's children to teach in the elementary or middle school. No one can appreciate how hard you work or how important your work is, unless of course, that person is a fellow NNELL member.

Teaching is hard work. Good teaching is even harder. And good foreign language teaching in grades K–8 is among the hardest jobs of all. It's physically demanding work. Some teachers see as many as 10 classes a day (or more!). Just the physical demands of moving from room to room, being physically active and engaging for 10 different groups of students who are pretty active themselves is demanding. And let's not forget the physical effort involved in making materials for all those students, loading and unloading those carts, and getting them from one end of the building to another. Oh, and don't let me neglect those of you who are also travelling between buildings!

But, I don't just mean that good K–8 foreign language teaching is physical hard work (although it surely is)—it's intellectually and emotionally demanding too. Good teaching requires careful, thoughtful planning, analyzing learner performance in light of curriculum goals. It means identifying where you want kids to end up, and then selecting among many alternatives the best ways to get them there. It means knowing about second language acquisition theory and how to apply it in your classroom; it means knowing what is developmentally appropriate to the children's age, cognitive maturity, and background knowledge; it means being responsive to the social needs of your students; and it means tailoring instruction to be responsive to the specific needs, abilities, and interests of the children with whom you work. You've got to know a lot and be darn smart to be a good foreign language teacher of younger learners.

Too few people in the schools and in our communities appreciate the high-quality work you do, your dedication to the cause of early language learning, and how you keep on giving 200% day after day despite occasional lack of resources, administrative support, or community interest.

NNELL has committed itself to quality foreign language learning for all children. NNELL cannot do it without you. So, again and again and again, I thank each and every one of you for making America's schools a better place and for caring enough to devote yourself to the children you serve. You truly do make a difference!

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NNELL Participation in New Visions 2000 Is Encouraged

The National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center (NFLRC) at Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) are collaborating on an initiative that seeks to address significant issues in foreign language education and to outline a plan of action that will be undertaken by the profession. (ED: See a description of the plan for New Visions in *Learning Languages*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 13–14.)

In June 1999, a planning meeting was held at Aberdeen Woods, Georgia, to discuss what the profession might do to address these critical concerns. From that meeting, five discussion papers emerged on the following topics:

- Architecture of the Profession
- Curriculum, Instruction, Articulation, and Assessment
- Research
- Teacher Development
- Teacher Recruitment

During the November 1999 ACTFL convention, the New Visions documents were discussed at the meeting of the ACTFL Delegate Assembly and at a special forum session on the project; the points raised during these discussions appear as an addendum to each discussion paper. You may obtain copies of the five papers from NFLRC or ACTFL or from the organizations' Web sites: www.educ.iastate.edu/nflrc or www.actfl.org. Your feedback on the papers is encouraged. To respond, use the form included on the Web sites or request a paper copy from NFLRC or ACTFL.

The next step in this process will be a retreat from June 15–18, 2000, at a conference center in Leesburg, Virginia. These facilities will accommodate up to 200 registrants, who will devote their time and expertise to refine the work done to date and to answer the following questions:

1. What can the profession do?
2. What are the priorities for these actions?
3. Who will do the work (the individuals, organizations, associations and related agencies that will collaborate to achieve the agreed upon objectives in a nonduplicative manner)?

NNELL members are encouraged to take part in this important national dialogue. An application form for the retreat may be requested from NFLRC or ACTFL or may be downloaded from the Web sites noted above. Applications will be accepted until space is filled. Limited fellowship support will be provided to participants who are unable to obtain institutional support and therefore would be unable to attend.

Let's Assess: Connecting Students, Parents, and Teachers

Janet Kucerik
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St. Petersburg, Florida

A third grader anxiously awaits his turn. His foreign language teacher has spotted the colorful cards tucked behind his name on the pocket chart that hangs prominently at the front of his classroom. Today is his day! He is particularly eager, because he knows the work he has done will allow him to advance to a new level of language learning, and he will receive a new sheet of cards to take home and show his mother or father. When his name is called, he stands and confidently names in Spanish the terms for the members of the family. After this recitation he names a food he likes to eat and—using a well-practiced expression—one he does not. His classmates applaud. His classroom teacher smiles with pride. His Spanish teacher beams with satisfaction and continues with her lesson. The Spanish teacher has "tested" three students in this third-grade classroom today, a practice repeated during almost every lesson as a natural component of each 25-minute lesson. Although she sees more than 200 students a day, the Spanish teacher is able to monitor individual growth in the listening and speaking proficiency of each student by using a process that integrates assessment and instruction. The data collected provide valuable information to her, her students, and their parents. It does not, however, feel like a test. It feels like success.

It does not, however, feel like a test. It feels like success.

Background

Like most elementary school foreign language teachers, the teachers at Bay Point Elementary Magnet School in Pinellas County, located in St. Petersburg, Florida, have had a lengthy struggle defining how to assess students effectively. The large numbers of students, the sacrifice of instructional time, artificial testing conditions, and difficulty in establishing authenticity in assessments have combined to pose a challenge familiar to many programs. The Pinellas County team's attempts at monitoring and documenting student progress have included a variety of testing procedures, among them yearly individual testing of oral and aural skills, group listening comprehension tests, and random sampling of children at certain grade levels for individual oral interviews. All undertakings resulted in significant interruption of instructional time and the feeling that artificial testing scenarios had little connection to classroom experience.

In an effort to align assessment with the teaching process, the team progressed to creating rubrics that identified skills acquired during classroom activities, such as fantasy trips, paired activities, and dramatic presentations (Curtain & Pesola, 1994). Although the connection to the learning experience was stronger, the resulting compilation of data still did not serve the desired purpose.

Needed was a process that integrated assessment with instruction and presented clear results that were accessible to parents and students (Stiggins & Knight, 1997). A bonus would be the ability to use the results for program evaluation and modification.

Assessment Goals

The teachers involved in the program recognized the need to involve all stakeholders in the assessment process as a way of attaining needed and practical results. A connection between parents, the classroom teacher, the student, and the foreign language teacher was envisioned, and a set of goals for an efficient home-assessment program began to emerge. These goals provide parents with information about the foreign language program and their childrens' progress and offer them the means to practice and support language learning at home; they also connect the foreign language practice to the classroom routine and provide classroom teachers with the means to review skills regularly with students. The goals empower students to set learning objectives and direct their own achievement. Finally, the goals integrate assessment with instruction, using a manageable process to produce assessment data that enable the foreign language teacher to generate useful student and program evaluations.

Materials

The assessment process that was developed uses 1) a pocket chart in each classroom, 2) assessment cards held in the pocket chart, which are written to reflect the linguistic goals of the program (printed on durable stock paper), 3) name cards for each student in the program, and 4) a "profile sheet" for recording the long-range achievement of each student. The profile sheet is kept in the student's portfolio and is updated regularly.

Parent Communication

Parents are introduced to the program by way of a letter that explains the goals of the program and the role of the parent. The Pinellas team has also found yearly workshops to be useful in demonstrating the assessment process to the parents.

Process

Students become familiar with the program on the first day of class by way of a pocket chart. It noticeably displays a name card for each child in the classroom. Each student receives Assessment Card A (see Fig.1), which contains ten skills, written in the native language, printed as small cards (10 fit on an 8 1/2" by 11" sheet). Beneath each skill is also printed a place for the student's name, the date, and parent signature. Students are instructed to take the assessment card home and practice the skills with a family member until they feel ready to present them in class. Consistent practice and growing confidence in the use of language, not rapid completion of cards, are the goals.

Once a child is ready to return a card to school, she cuts it out and places it behind her name in the pocket chart in the classroom. Each day after the warm-up portion of the foreign language lesson, the teacher uses the cards placed in the pocket chart by students to review skills and assess students. Thus, in addition to reviewing skills with all students, individual student progress is assessed. If a student demonstrates that she can successfully complete the task, the teacher initials the completed card. Completed cards are later recorded on the student's profile sheet. Students receive the next level assessment card once all of the skills on the previous card have been successfully presented in class.

The goals empower students to set learning objectives and direct their own achievement.

Benefits

Student Progress. The positive nature of the program is reflected in

Figure 1. Assessment Card A.

I can count up to 10 objects in Spanish. Name: Date: Parent's Signature:	**I can identify 3 shapes in Spanish.** Name: Date: Parent's Signature:
I can name 4 foods in Spanish. Name: Date: Parent's Signature:	**I can identify 5 body parts in Spanish.** Name: Date: Parent's Signature:
I can identify 6 colors in Spanish. Name: Date: Parent's Signature	**I can identify 4 animals in Spanish.** Name: Date: Parent's Signature:
I can name 3 family members in Spanish. Name: Date: Parent's Signature:	**I can say the days of the week in Spanish.** Name: Date: Parent's Signature:
I can greet an adult in Spanish. Name: Date: Parent's Signature:	**I can respond yes / no to the following questions in Spanish** **1. ¿Te gusta el chocolate?** **2. ¿Te gusta el español?** Name: Date: Parent's Signature:
Parent's Comments or Questions:	
Pinellas County FLES Team/ 1997 **A**	

active participation of the students, who are empowered by the privilege of informing the foreign language teacher when they are ready to be tested. This assessment model provides clear learning goals. Students are able to set personal goals and control their achievement (Stiggins, 1997). Particularly important to most early foreign language programs is the consideration of students new to the program. The Home Assessment Program allows students, no matter what their grade level or past language experience, to begin at level A and progress at a comfortable pace.

Pinellas County teachers report that the repeated home and classroom practice results in higher levels of language competence than was recorded with traditional assessments. Another payoff of the program has

been increased student involvement in the assessment of peers, a valuable team-building component (Stiggins, 1997). Students who have mastered certain skills model and encourage others to learn those skills. Assessment is no longer isolated from classroom experience; it is a shared, public event.

Student participation in the Home Assessment Program, although not used as criteria for any traditional student grade, has increased significantly with each year of implementation. In the program's first year, 65% of third graders returned cards regularly and progressed through at least one level of the program. That participation increased to 72% in the second year. Currently, 85% of the third-grade students who were introduced to the program this year bring cards back regularly and are enthusiastically involved in the program. Teachers also report increased confidence and accuracy in students' use of Spanish with each year they continue in the program. Since material is introduced and reintroduced, children have an opportunity to grow in confidence and language proficiency (Shrum & Glisan, 1994). This outcome is a result of the spiraling nature of the foreign language curriculum, as it builds skills needed for communication and focuses on continuous improvement (Omaggio, 1986).

Classroom Teacher Involvement. Sharing in the foreign language assessment process is the classroom teacher, who may also participate in the foreign language assessment program. Classroom teachers who feel they are a part of the language teaching team can extend language learning in the regular school day (Curtain & Pesola, 1994). Establishing specific, undemanding roles for the classroom teacher makes an integrated content-related foreign language program much more feasible. Involvement in the language program can be uncomfortable for the classroom teacher who has limited or unsuccessful experience with second-language learning.

The Home Assessment Program, however, not only isolates skills that classroom teachers can practice with their students, but also allows the classroom teacher to use his or her native language while eliciting student practice of the target language. In addition, the program allows the classroom teacher to set goals for his or her own language development while participating in the program along with the students. Often the classroom teacher learns from the students.

An additional benefit of the assessment program is that all students in the class are exposed to more Spanish, and skills are reinforced repeatedly. As part of daily morning exercises, at the end of the day, or whenever the teacher has several minutes before lessons or while awaiting the arrival of a specialist, the classroom teacher can use the pocket chart to ask a child to perform or practice a skill. The process empowers the student, giving her the opportunity to showcase a skill she has mastered. Classroom teachers at Bay Point who use the cards during school-day transition times report that the cards are a source of pride for the students and a valuable connection to the foreign language program.

. . . all students in the class are exposed to more Spanish, and skills are reinforced repeatedly.

Parent Involvement. Parents traditionally are not included in the testing process. It is often particularly difficult to involve parents in the foreign language program, yet the importance of total community involvement in the school program has become a vital component of quality school programs (Carregal et al., 1999). Their own limited or negative experiences with second language learning can make parents reluctant to participate in their child's learning.

Giving them a role in the assessment process not only connects them to their child's learning, but also raises their awareness of what is being taught in the program. Throughout the

school year, parents are informed about what their students should be practicing at home and how well they are doing.

Evaluation Results

Classroom Teachers. In a recent questionnaire designed to elicit feedback on the Home Assessment Program at Bay Point, a fifth-grade teacher wrote, "Students share their knowledge with their parents, which helps to reinforce concepts with additional practice; the program also helps the child develop organizational skills."

A fourth-grade classroom teacher added, "The Home Assessment Program allows parents to appreciate the growing level of their child's understanding of Spanish. Homework is presented in a fun, collaborative setting, and is often tied to the regular curriculum. Finally, it provides me with a way to practice Spanish with my students."

A fifth-grade classroom teacher shared that she practices the skills on the cards along with her students. "I have a student sign my card once I am able to recite the skill correctly."

Parents. A questionnaire was distributed to a sampling of Bay Point parents who had participated in the Home Assessment Program for at least one year to determine in what ways, if at all, the program keeps them informed about the foreign language curriculum. One Bay Point parent responded, "I see the progress being made by my child. I also see the progression of the program as a whole."

"I see the progress being made by my child. . . ."

Another parent wrote of her experience with the Home Assessment Program with her son, grade four, and her daughter, grade five: "Since I have no knowledge of Spanish, the program gives me a tool to help my children study. It also gives me an idea of how they are progressing. Because we treat it as 'homework,' it raises the level of seriousness of the course, teaching the children that they must work in order to learn. Finally, it allows me to regularly reinforce the value of learning a second language."

The results of a survey distributed to all parents who had children in either fourth or fifth grade and who had had the opportunity to participate in the Home Assessment Program for at least one full year were encouraging. With 72 parents responding, 60 parents, or 83% of respondents, knew what the Home Assessment Program was and said that their child had participated in the program. Within that subgroup of 60, 59 parents, or 98%, felt that the program helped them to better know what their child was learning in Spanish class. Ninety-seven percent of the subgroup parents reported that their child enjoyed completing cards at home and felt that their child was routinely able to return signed cards to school without a problem. Eighty-three percent of these parents thought that the program increased the amount of time their child spent practicing Spanish outside of the classroom.

When originally piloted, the program included an assortment of grade levels, K–5. After one year with the program, it was determined that the cards were too difficult for young children (grades K–2) to handle and return successfully to school. For this reason, an alternative assessment program was developed for the primary grades.

Conclusions

Concerns about constraints of time, the usefulness of the testing results to parents and program evaluators, and the degree to which testing was connected to instruction and student language proficiency convinced Bay Point foreign language teachers to develop a radically new assessment program. In addition, implementation of national and state standards contributed to the need to identify assessment goals aligned with the strands, standards, and benchmarks of the standards.

The new program needed to 1) reflect a more direct connection between teaching and testing, 2) involve all

stakeholders, and 3) be built around the philosophy of continuous improvement (Carregal et al., 1999). Since a large portion of classroom time is spent in learning language for communication in meaningful contexts, the new testing program needed to do the same, while producing results that would be both accessible to students and parents and valuable to foreign language teachers for program planning (Stiggins & Knight, 1997).

With the implementation of the Home Assessment Program at Bay Point Elementary, student performance has been placed in a perspective of student progress and achievement and provides evidence that program goals are being achieved (Met, 1998). Perhaps most important to the Bay Point foreign language teachers, however, is that the repeated home and classroom practice results in higher levels of language competence than previously recorded with traditional assessments and there now are data that show teachers the instructional gaps related to student performance.

Now in its third year, the Home Assessment Program continues to evolve as it meets the need of a changing elementary school foreign language program. Integrated with the lesson, student-centered, efficient, and progressive, it is a test that feels like success.

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Content-Based Language Learning—Why and How?

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Introduction

The content-based approach in early foreign language education is of great value because it goes beyond linguistic content to integrate all school learning into instruction. Early foreign language learning has always tended to use themes as a vehicle for teaching; the primary difference today is the importance that is attached to the content itself (Genesee, 1998). Current perspectives emphasize the use of authentic, meaningful, and often cognitively challenging content (Met, 1997; Genesee, 1998). A major emphasis is on subject matter content from the school curriculum—math, science, social studies, and other subjects. Yet Curtain and Haas (1995) note that content in the foreign language classroom may even expand beyond the school curriculum to include varied sources, such as the learners' everyday life and specific cultural themes.

The content-based approach gives students a more integrated view of their own learning. . . .

In some approaches, the content assumes as much significance as the language when it comes to evaluating the success of instruction (Genesee, 1998). Immersion programs, for example, focus on academic content as the medium of language instruction. The success of these programs is critically dependent on students' mastery of the academic content to the same degree and level as students in native-language classrooms. In other cases, academic content may serve as the medium for language instruction, but during evaluation greater significance is attached to mastery of language skills than to the accompanying academic or cognitive skills associated with the content being taught (Snow, et al., 1989).

The content-based approach gives students a more integrated view of their own learning by enabling them to see the interconnection between the various subjects they study. For example, when students study about the four seasons, food, or the hospital in social studies and these same topics are addressed in the foreign language classroom, there is reinforcement of learning and a strong sense of related learning.

Genesee (1998) identifies a number of reasons for content-based approaches in early foreign language learning—the most relevant of which will be addressed here. First, for young children, language, cognitive, and social development go hand-in-hand. Language is a primary vehicle for social and cognitive development during childhood. Content-based language instruction maintains the integrity of these critical components of development. Second, few young learners are motivated to acquire language for its own sake. Foreign language instruction that uses meaningful and developmentally appropriate content motivates language learning. Third, integrating language instruction with authentic content and communication provides critical cognitive and social substrates for learning language

and represents a real communicative and cognitive value. Fourth, foreign language instruction that integrates authentic content, especially domain-specific content, such as science or social studies, acknowledges and maintains the domain-specific ways in which language is used in real-world contexts. In other words, learners in content-based classrooms learn socially and culturally appropriate ways of using the target language.

There are a number of excellent descriptions of the content-based approach (Lipton, 1998). One famous example, which is often presented in workshops on early language learning, is the caterpillar story, written by Eric Carle.

The following content-based unit has been useful in my early foreign language classroom, in which I teach ten- and eleven-year-old children, who started to learn English when they were six and seven years old. This project is about hats (see Fig. 1). It took us five lessons to finish our unit, which addressed the following subjects: science, language arts, mathematics, social studies, music, physical education, and art.

Brainstorming

To begin, I chose a simple topic—hats—and wrote the word in the center of a large piece of paper and drew a circle around it. In groups of four, the students brainstormed and wrote down the key words related to the word, within the limits of their target-language (English) vocabulary (see Fig. 2). In the very early stages of language instruction, the teacher may choose to accept some mother tongue equivalents and then write these down in the target language. Such a brainstorming session might yield the following words:

woman	wool	cloth
man	wind	Robin Hood
red	Nike	winter
children	Fishbone	rain
boys	Benetton	green
girls	Little Red Riding Hood	
colors	cold	brown
blue	straw	purple

Mapping

I guided the students in identifying groups of related words within the long list and developing names for these secondary categories. We wrote the names around the central idea word, connecting them to the central idea and to each other with lines, and then listed the related words beneath the new subcategory title. Figure 3 shows what the categories in one example looked like. Using graphic organizers can be an effective type of strategy for helping students to develop skills such as comparing, contrasting, and analysis (Curtain & Pesola, 1998).

Using graphic organizers can be an effective type of strategy for helping students to develop skills such as comparing, contrasting, and analysis.

Singing

Songs learned in the target language have the double benefit of giving students experience with an important dimension of the target culture and helping them to internalize the vocabulary, rhythms, and structures of the new language. We chose a song connected with hats, "My Hat Has Three Corners," which students already knew in the mother tongue (Slovenian) and which they had also learned in English and German (many of the children can speak German because we live not far from the Austrian border). Singing and miming the song in three different languages was quite an experience for students.

Recognizing, Labeling, and Describing

Proponents of cooperative learning indicate that it has an important place in the development of social skills (Curtain & Pesola, 1998). Cooperative activities also have an important place in the development of language, since as students work cooperatively they develop language functions that are an integral part of the foreign-language curriculum. Learning how to interact in

Figure 1. Content-based unit about hats.

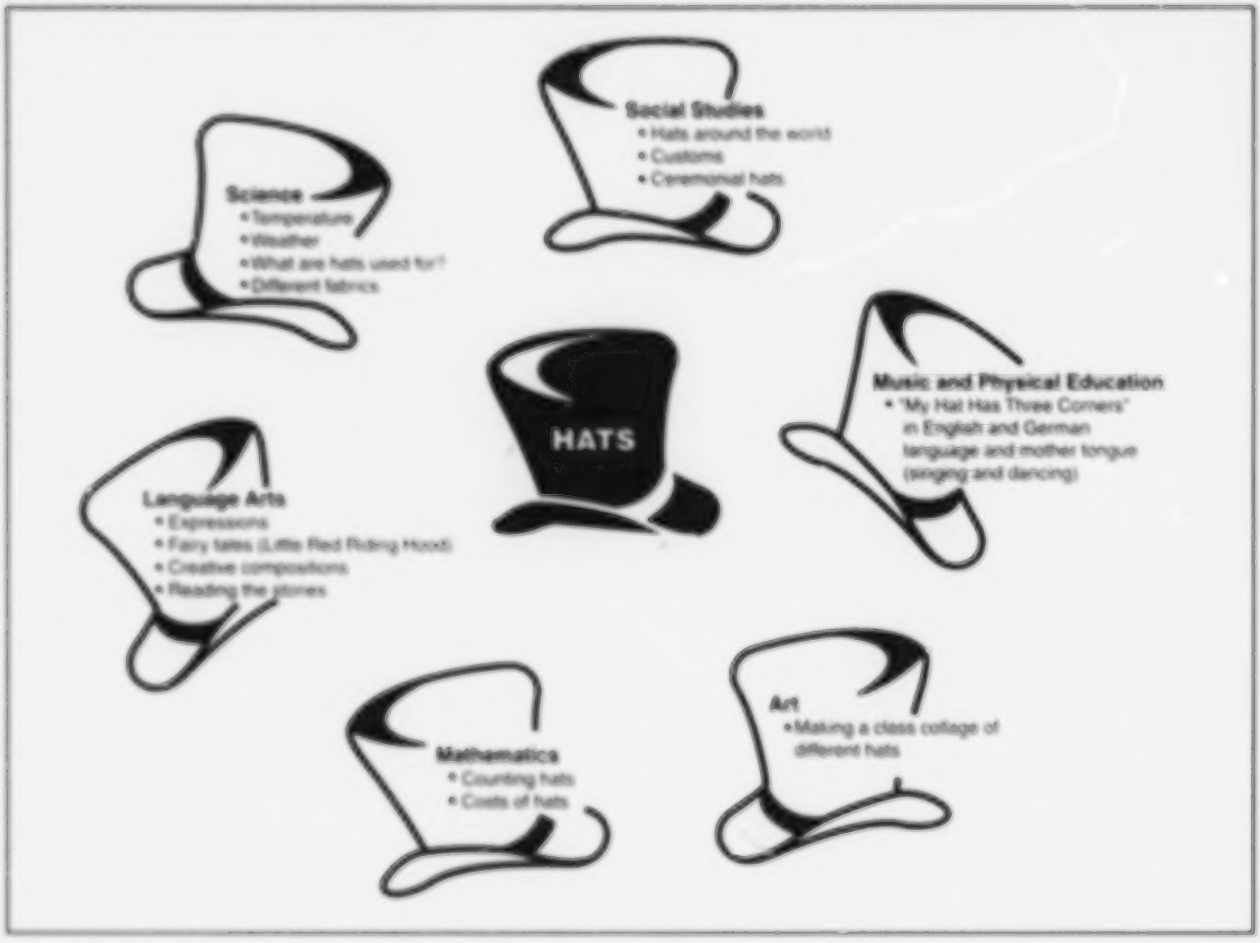


Figure 2. Topic word, hats, with related key words given by students.

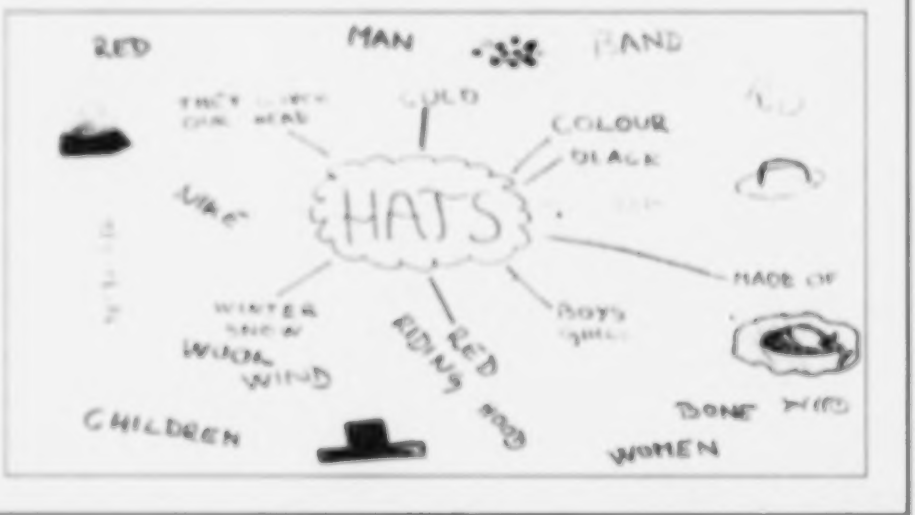
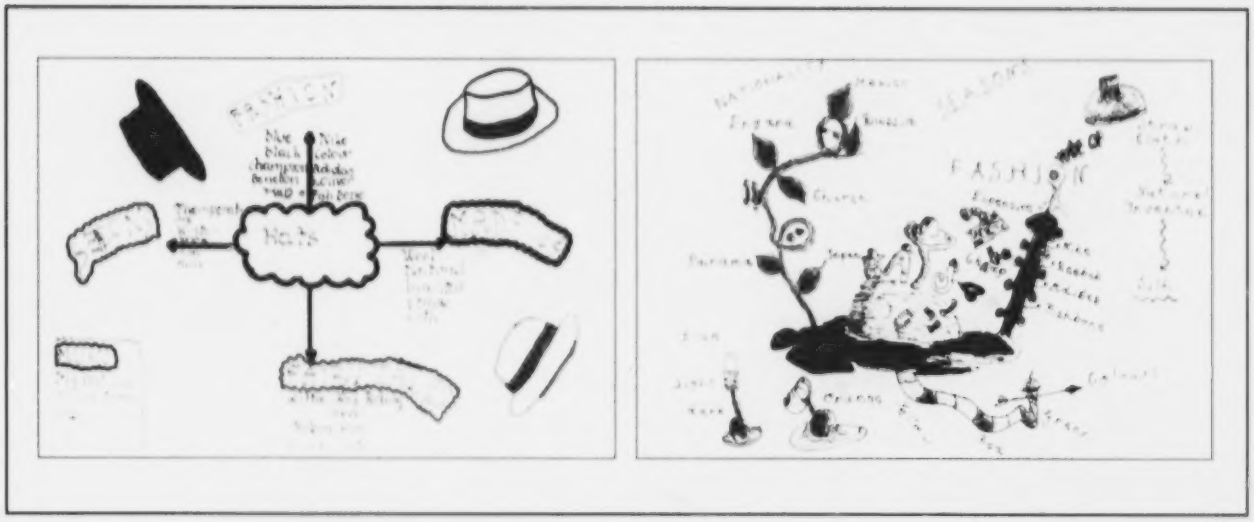


Figure 3. Mapping words related to the topic word.



a group in the target language also will enable students to be more open and receptive to speakers of the target language.

For homework, students collected pictures of hats around the world, described the hats, labeled them, and compared them with hats from their own country. Next, students worked in groups to plan and prepare activities that use the hats. I gave students the possibility of deciding what they would like to prepare, but also gave some suggestions. The results were wonderful:

- One group of students folded four pieces of paper and tied them up with a thread. On each side they drew a hat and described it. Thus, they made a booklet of different hats.
- One group prepared a crossword puzzle of hats.
- One group drew a map of Europe, identifying the different countries, then labeling different hats in each country.

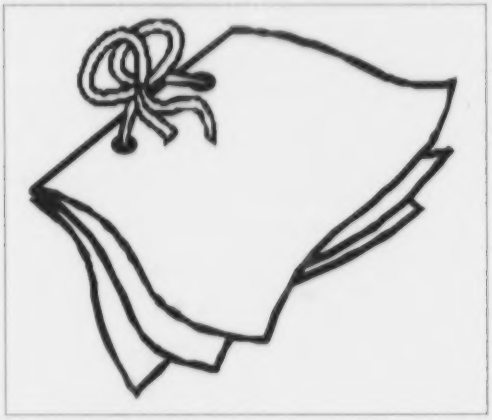
Figure 4 provides some examples of students' work.

Story Dramatization and Pantomime

Egan (1979, 1986) identifies the use of the story form as one of the most effective tools for communicating new information to young learners. Curtain and Pesola (1998) clarify that the story selected should be one that is familiar to children from their native culture, should include a large proportion of previously learned vocabulary, and be repetitive, making use of patterns that occur regularly and predictably.

To begin, I asked the students if they knew any stories in which hats were important. They all remembered two stories: *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Robin Hood*. Then I gave the students the following words written on small cards: *active, good-looking, girl, cloak, wood, old, granny, bed, picnic, basket, cherry juice, buns, cakes, wonderful, primrose, path, wolf, eat*. If there were some words that they did not understand, we discussed and explained them together. The task that they had to do was to put the words in an order that would suggest sentences that would tell the story of

Figure 4. Student projects from the content-based unit on hats.



A booklet about different hats.

A drawing of a stocking cap belonging to one of the students.

A crossword puzzle about hats.

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Little Red Riding Hood.

First the students wrote (in groups of five) their stories about *Little Red Riding Hood.* Then these five students performed the story, with one student reading and the other four miming. Each of them took one role: Red Riding Hood, granny, wolf, and hunter. Their role-playing was great and they enjoyed the miming and had fun with the activity.

Writing Compositions

It is difficult enough for early foreign language students to write in their mother tongue, but even more so in a foreign language. We know that writing is one of the abilities that should be developed with the primary goal of communication. Teachers need, therefore, to be especially sensitive to the various writing demands they are making on their students in their foreign language classes and to be aware of a variety of ways of supporting their writing (Brewster, et al., 1992). Much of the writing students are asked to produce in a foreign language classroom is designed to provide specific language practice, in selecting and spelling words correctly, as well as in using grammatical structures accurately. To focus on communication, young learners must be encouraged to produce "creative" or "free" writing in the foreign language. This is sometimes difficult to do and requires a great deal of support at the levels of word, sentence, and text.

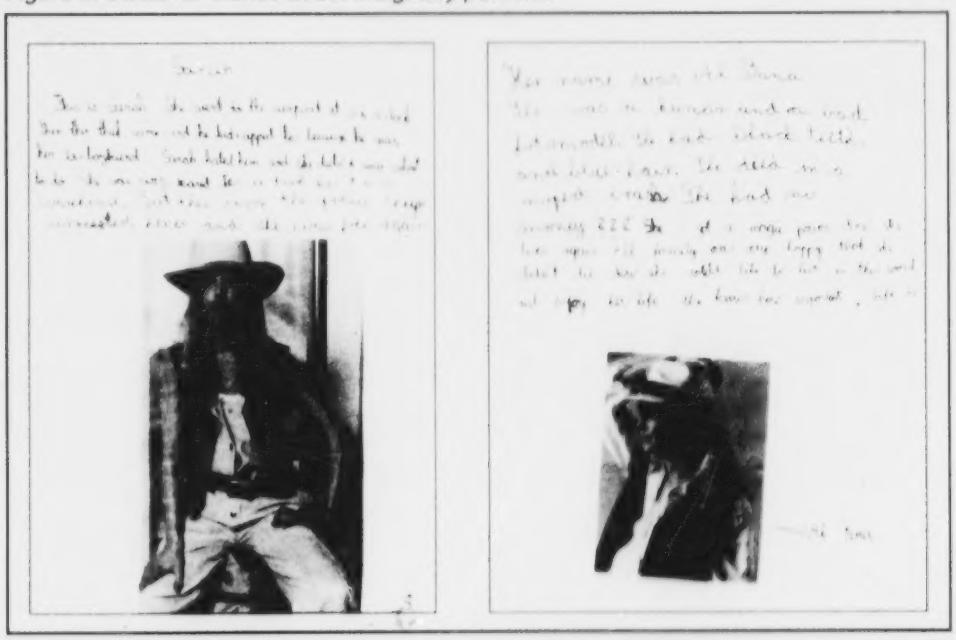
From magazines I collected pictures of different people wearing hats. I put the pictures face down on a table and asked students to choose one picture. I wrote on the board the following questions: Who? Where? When? Why? and What happened? In groups of three the students wrote a short story about an imaginary person. They wrote who the person in the picture is and where he/she is. Next they addressed the problem the person is facing and proposed when and why the problem occurred. Each group then passed their story on to the next group that had to solve the problem.

Creative Activities

Creative art activities are an important part of the general curriculum, because they not only stimulate

To focus on communication, young learners must be encouraged to produce "creative" or "free" writing in the foreign language.

Figure 5. Students' stories about imaginary persons.



. . . one should keep in mind that it is the *process* that is important.

children's imagination, but also develop skills such as hand-eye coordination. They are also very enjoyable and motivating. While planning a creative activity, remember that it is essential that the teacher try it out first. It is also important not to expect works of art from the students (although you may well get one); one should keep in mind that it is the *process* that is important. It is unrealistic to expect that students will speak in the target language all of the time they are working, although the teacher should encourage them to use target phrases such as *May I have the scissors/glue, please?* To reinforce the children's connection with the target culture, a tape of songs in the target language can be played while the children work. When the students have finished, they should show their work either in the classroom or around the school. This gives them pride in their work and allows other groups to come into contact with the target language.

At the end of our project students made their own hats from newspaper and together we sang the song "My Hat Has Three Corners" in three different languages and danced.

Conclusions

In order to achieve and maintain high student interest and motivation for content-based language learning, educators must organize their lessons and activities around the needs and interests of students. They must also focus their thematic teaching on meaningful and interesting information in order to help their students use the foreign language and connect ideas and information and make them more understandable and easier to remember. To be compatible with the goals and philosophy of the elementary school, planning for content-based teaching should address the needs and the development of the whole child.

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NNELL President Receives Anthony Papalia Award

Dr. Myriam Met, NNELL President, received the ACTFL-NYSAFLT Anthony Papalia Award for Excellence in Teacher Education, which was presented at the annual meeting of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in November 1999, Dallas, Texas. Alicia Belozerco, chair of the award committee, highlighted Dr. Met's accomplishments:

> As "a teacher of teachers and an exemplary learner," Dr. Myriam Met has influenced both national and international foreign language education for several decades.
>
> She is a founder of NADSFL, the nominating organization, and a founding member of the National Network for Early Language Learning, which highly endorsers her nomination. Other endorsements include the Dean of Weber State University, AATSP, members of Concordia College, the board of the National Standards in Foreign Language Education Collaborative Project, the National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, and teachers, principals, and coordinators of the public school systems in Fairfax County, Virginia, North Carolina, Montgomery County, Maryland, and Cincinnati, Ohio.
>
> Among Mimi's many publications are textbooks widely used in both elementary and secondary schools, research-based books, chapters, and articles on educational issues such as the national standards, the teaching of culture, second-language acquisition, proficiency and proficiency-based instruction, ESL, FLES, bilingual education, immersion, and curriculum development. She has also worked to implement programs for Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Indochinese, and Spanish.
>
> Mimi's voice has been heard as far as Finland, Japan, Spain, France, Israel, Great Britain, Pakistan, and Canada, as keynote speaker, panel moderator, presenter at numerous professional conferences, and as invited guest at the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, and the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanic-Americans. She is the recipient of numerous fellowships, honors, and national awards, and was named to the Order of the Palmes Academiques by the government of France, as well as to La Foundation Franco-Americaine and French Ministry of France at their invitational seminars in France.
>
> In the words of a colleague, "There are few in our profession who have made such outstanding contributions to language learners and teachers as Myriam Met." We are honored to recognize Mimi for her leadership and lifetime work.

Good teaching matters and I have always wanted to be a good teacher. Being a good teacher is not just hard work; it is a never-ending process of becoming one. I am grateful to all the good teachers I have worked with in schools, in workshops, and on projects, for if I have learned anything at all about good teaching, it comes from many years of working with them. They are the real heroes of education. My thanks also go to my talented colleagues in the National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages and the National Network for Early Language Learning who have helped me become better at what I try to do; to my good friend and colleague, Eileen Lorenz, whose expertise and fierce dedication to excellence have helped me grow and learn; and to my family —Leon, Michael, and Jamie—for their support, sense of humor, and long-suffering patience.

— Myriam Met

NNELL at ACTFL

Dallas, Texas, November 1999

NNELL Executive Board honors Christy Brown in appreciation for her leadership as president, 1998–99. Front row, from left: *Marcia Pastorek, Mari Haas, Janet Glass, Marcia Rosenbusch, Carol Ann Pesola Dahlberg;* middle row, from left: *Jan Kucerik, Christy Brown, Kay Hewitt, Mary Lynn Redmond, Kathleen Riordan;* back row, from left: *Nancy Rhodes, Carine Feyten, Michael Nettleton, Lori Langer de Ramirez, Madeleine Phol, Susan Walker, Penny Armstrong.*

NNELL Executive Board in action. From left: *Mary Lynn Redmond, Nancy Rhodes, Mari Haas, Michael Nettleton, and Marcia Pastorek (see inside front and back covers of* Learning Languages *to identify each person's NNELL role.*

The NNELL booth at ACTFL Exhibitors' Hall. Mari Haas, far left, *organized NNELL's exhibit. She enjoyed the help of many NNELL members, several of whom are pictured here.*

ACTFL '99 Features Lively FLES Swapshop

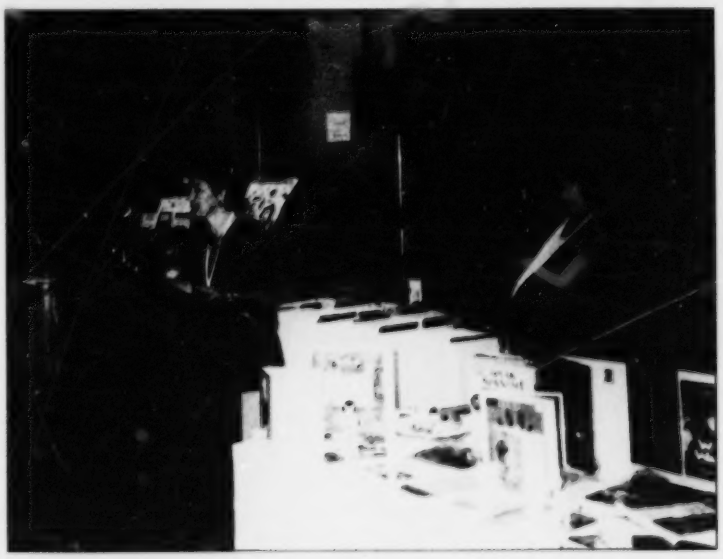
Over 200 early language educators networked, visited publishers' tables, sang, danced, collected almost 100 classroom teaching activities prepared by attendees, won raffle prizes, and enjoyed a delicious buffet at the FLES Swapshop Breakfast. NNELL sponsored this popular event, which was part of the ACTFL '99 meeting in Dallas.

Mimi Met, president of NNELL, welcomed participants, introduced the NNELL board members, and gave a short report on important NNELL activities.

An exciting new event at this year's swapshop was entertainment by Grupo Cañaveral from Florida. Teachers, NNELL state and regional reps, and board members rose from their seats for foot-stomping songs and games as Hilda Luisa and Nelson Zuleta sang and played various instruments. The enthusiasm was contagious!

Thirteen publishers displayed their FLES products at the swapshop. They, as well as many other companies, contributed great prizes for the raffle. Raffle winners went home with posters, software, storybooks, magazines, T-shirts, curriculum materials, and much more. NNELL greatly appreciates the support of the following publishers: Asia for Kids/Master Communications, Bayard Press, Berlitz Languages for Kids, Cheng & Tsui, Early Advantage, Edumate Educational Materials, Grupo Cañaveral, MEP School Division, North-South Books, NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group, REI America, Soleil Software, and Sosnowski Associates. Please request their catalogs so that your classroom can be enriched with their wonderful products for teaching languages K–8!

We also thank Applause, Carlex, Concordia Summer Language Villages, Ideal Books, Libros



Mari Haas, NNELL publisher liaison, addresses participants at the NNELL Swapshop Breakfast. Mimi Met, NNELL president and next Swapshop Breakfast speaker, stands beside one of the many publisher book displays.

NNELL Swapshop Breakfast participants pick up one of the many handouts of classroom activities shared by elementary school foreign language teachers.

HispanoAmericanos, Miraflores, Prentice Hall, Rhyme Time, Risas y Sonrisas, and World of Reading for contributing raffle prizes.

For your convenience, the following list provides informational briefs about each of the publishers that had a swapshop display.

Asia for Kids/
Master Communications
800-765-5885; Fax: 513-563-3105; E-mail: master@afk.com; Web site: www.asiaforkids.com

Distributes a variety of cultural and curriculum materials (information and storybooks, videos, cassettes, CD ROMs, rubber stamps, and posters) for K–12 classrooms in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, as well as, ESL/EFL and bilingual materials in Albanian, Arabic, Hmong, Khmer, Lao, Spanish, and Serbo Croatian.

Bayard Press
301-299-5920; Fax: 301-983-8917

Publishes educational magazines in French, Spanish, and Chinese for every level from kindergarten to college. The many different magazine formats include stories, subject content, and general interesting cultural information. The magazines are great for kids to read, and they serve as resources for teachers.

Berlitz Languages for Kids
718-748-1879; Fax: 718-921-3020; E-mail: Harrybarfrost@berlitz.com; Web site: www.berlitz.com

Publishes a five-level teaching program for early childhood, elementary, and intermediate school in Spanish, French, Italian, German, and Japanese. Each level includes a teacher's plan book, picture pack, and audiocassette, as well as a student workbook.

Cheng & Tsui
617-426-6074; Fax: 617-426-3669; E-mail: exec@cheng-tsui.com; Web site: www.cheng-tsui.com

Publishes and distributes East and Southeast Asian language and cultural materials for all age groups. They have not only curriculum materi-

als and storybooks, but also T-shirts, tote bags, and other products to promote teaching Asian languages at all levels.

Early Advantage
203-259-6480; Fax: 203-259-0869; E-mail: mail@early-advantage.com; Web site: www.early-advantage.com

Publishes MUZZY, the BBC Language Course for Children offered in Spanish, Italian, French, and German for children pre-K–8. This engaging and educational program now comes in a classroom edition that is especially designed for use in schools.

Edumate Educational Materials
619-275-7117; Fax: 619-275-7120; E-mail: edumate@aol.com

Offers a wide selection of books, posters, games, music, videos, toys, manipulatives, and teacher resources in English and Spanish for all subjects and grade levels. Edumate is a great resource for content materials, and the collection of music they offer is extensive.

Grupo Cañaveral
800-CANTARE; Fax: 305-480-0023; E-mail: info@hispanicmusic.com; Web site: www.hispanicmusic.com

Offers traditional Hispanic American music for the Spanish and multicultural classroom. Their cassettes and CDs have accompanying lyric booklets, teachers' manuals, and student activity books. The music is clear and upbeat and would enrich any Spanish K–8 classroom.

MEP School Division
800-380-8919; Fax: 847-866-6290; E-mail: info@mep-eli.com; Web site: www.mep-eli.com

Distributes imported and domestic foreign language and ESL materials in nine languages (foreign language text and supplementary texts, literature, dictionaries, reference materials, juvenile literature and texts, audiotapes, videos, blackline masters, and teacher resources). They also feature special imports in Spanish, French, and German for immersion and elementary school classes.

North-South Books
212-463-9736; Fax: 212-633-1004; E-mail: mmartens@northsouth.com; Web site: www.northsouth.com

Publishes best-selling children's picture books in French, German, Spanish, Japanese, and Italian. They also feature buttons, calendars, and storybook characters to accompany the books. Curriculum units to accompany some of the books are available to download from their Web site.

NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group
800-323-4900; Fax: 847-679-2494; E-mail: NTCPub@Tribune.com; Web site: www.ntc-school.com

Distributes and publishes world languages materials for elementary school to adults, including textbook series, literature, grammar, and cultural titles. Their elementary school foreign language programs include *Vive le français!*, *Viva el español!*, and *Español para ti*. Storybooks, teacher resources (including *Teacher to Teacher*, standards-based scenarios published in collaboration with NNELL), and video learning programs are also available.

REI America Inc.
800-726-5337; Fax: 305-871-8032; E-mail: javcas@aol.com; Web site: www.reipublishing.com

Offers techniques and materials to help K–6 students move into and through secondary Spanish courses, eliminating the need to "start over" when they go to high school. The full curriculum program *Amigos* has a fresh approach to teaching in FLES and immersion classes.

Soleil Software
650-494-0114; Fax: 650-493-6416; E-mail: info@soleil.com; Web site: www.soleil.com

Produces pre-K–12 CD-ROM programs that offer a content-based, multicultural, and multidisciplinary approach to learning foreign languages. Life science, mathematics, and other skills are presented in Spanish or German/French/English, or Japanese. All programs are rated "Only the Best" by ASCD and "Exemplary" or "Desirable" by the State of California.

Sosnowski Associates
508-358-7891; Fax: 508-358-6687; E-mail: sosnow@ma.ultranet.com; Web site: www.ultranet.com/~sosnow/

Distributes preschool though university French and Spanish supplementary materials from European and Canadian publishers. Products include children's literature, cassettes, software, and texts for French immersion programs. They feature teacher's curriculum resource guides for stories in Spanish and French (and accompanying texts) developed by the National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center at Iowa State University.

News from NNELL State Reps

A Report to the NNELL Executive Board, ACTFL 1999

Greetings from Minnesota!

The state meeting of the Minnesota Council on the Teaching of Languages and Cultures was held on October 29–30, 1999. It was well attended, and over 40 teachers came to a NNELL session.

Those at the NNELL meeting decided to set up a communications network. It will enable us to discuss, ask questions, seek resources, etc. I also will continue to share NNELL news. Once the network is functional, we plan to add other elementary and middle school teachers, keep ourselves well informed, and be supportive of one another.

A need identified at the meeting was to share stimulating, engaging, and culturally rich children's literature for use in thematic units. This month [November 1999], via the network, we will share children's literature resources for a variety of thematic units.

I spoke about and distributed copies of the materials on the two NNELL publications, *Teacher to Teacher: Model Lessons for K–8 Foreign Language* and *Critical Issues in Early Second Language Learning*, that we received at the NNELL 1999 summer workshop in Connecticut. I summarized the work of this conference and invited teachers to go to the June 2000 New Visions in Foreign Languages Education conference. (ED: See information about New Visions in this issue.)

I also asked participants to write a letter of support to their members of Congress for the education reauthorization bill that was then before the Senate. I provided a sample letter to facilitate the process, and they promised to write letters in support of the bill and foreign languages.

In addition, together with other teachers in the group, I shared written standards-based activities and encouraged discussion about the activities. I also encouraged them to continue high attendance at the fall conference, a time when they can stay abreast of NNELL news.

We discussed meeting again in February 2000. We hope to focus on storytelling and will perhaps seek funds for a workshop on Total Physical Response storytelling. We will discuss plans over e-mail in order to realize such a conference of elementary teachers.

In addition to these activities, I have been serving the profession by fielding frequent requests for advice about starting new programs or to speak at university methods classes.

The year ahead promises to be another exciting year working with our state's professionals—it is rewarding! Warm regards to everyone on the NNELL board. You are making a difference! *Arriba y adelante!*

— Kathy Olson-Studler

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Activities for Your Classroom

Let's Party—Birthday Style!

Kay L. Reid
Stevens Creek Elementary
Martinez, Georgia

Context:
Prior to this activity, students have learned numbers to at least 31, the months of the year, as well as sentence structure for dates in Spanish. Possessives have also been taught (i.e., not Julie's birthday, but rather, the birthday of Julie). Students should also be familiar with various interrogative words in the target language (What? When? How? How many?) in order to easily ask and answer the questions in the lesson. Class sessions are 30 minutes in length and are taught completely in the target language.

Objectives:
Students in grades 2–4 demonstrate understanding of expressions about birthdays by answering and asking questions. They also apply and reinforce graphing skills from the grade-level content curriculum as they respond to questions concerning how many boys/girls have birthdays in March, etc.

Examples:

1. *¿Cuándo es tu cumpleaños?* (When is your birthday?)
2. *Mi cumpleaños es el dos de octubre.* (My birthday is October second.)
3. *El cumpleaños de Elisa es el cuatro de mayo.* (Lisa's birthday is May fourth.)
4. *¿Cuántas muchachas tienen cumpleaños en junio?* (How many girls have birthdays in June?)

Targeted Standards:

Communication
1.1 Interpersonal Communication.
Students provide and obtain information about birthdays.

Cultures
2.1 Practices and Perspectives of Culture.
Students learn about the way children's birthdays are celebrated in Spanish-speaking countries.

Connections
3.1 Making Connections.
Students reinforce and further their knowledge of graphing skills.

Materials:
1. Laminated posters with months in columns for graphing.
2. Laminated small birthday cakes (red for boys, green for girls). See Figure 1.
3. Overhead marking pen.
4. Puppet.

Procedure:
(Note: This lesson may be completed in one day if there are about 22–23 students in the class, and if the birthday song has been taught ahead of time. If classes are larger, two days might be required, with Day Two beginning at the point where students' names are written on the paper birthday cakes, which are then placed on the graph. Do the Assessment portion on separate days after the lesson has been taught.)

Begin by asking Paco (puppet) when his birthday is. *¿Cuándo es tu cumpleaños?* (When is your birthday?). The puppet responds, *Mi cumpleaños es el tres de noviembre.* (My birthday is November third.) Repeat the information, *El cumpleaños de Paco es el tres de noviembre.* (Paco's birthday is November third.) Announce excitedly, *Hoy es el cumpleaños de Paco!* (Today is Paco's birthday!) *Vamos a cantar "Cumpleaños feliz!"* (Let's sing "Happy Birthday!")

Sing with the class the song *"Cumpleaños feliz"* to Paco, as well as a previously learned traditional birthday song from Spain, *"Feliz, feliz en tu dia."* If music is not available, teach the song as a cultural birthday rhyme:

Feliz, feliz en tu dia
Amiguito que Dios te bendiga
Que reine la paz en tu dia
Y que cumplas muchos más.

Show the *piñata* and explain that in Spanish-speaking countries a very popular custom is that of breaking a *piñata* on someone's birthday. In some cases this takes the place of a traditional birthday cake. (Note: I usually do not include with this activity the actual breaking of a *piñata* by students.)

Model a conversation with Paco by having Paco ask you, *¿Cuándo es tu cumpleaños?* (When is your birthday?). Answer with, *Mi cumpleaños es el treinta de septiembre.* (My birthday is September thirtieth.) Turn students' attention to a birthday graph on a poster by pointing out that months in Spanish begin with lower case letters instead of upper case as in English. Also write the sentence *Mi cumpleaños es el 30 de septiembre.* on the chalkboard, showing the way a birthdate is written in Spanish. Then write the same sentence, only changing the position of the number 30 as follows: *"Mi cumpleaños es septiembre 30."* Ask the class, *¿Es correcto, o no es correcto?* (Is it correct or not correct?). Encourage the class to respond, *No es correcto* (It is not correct) and place an "X" over the incorrect writing of the date. Write a few more dates, some correct and some incorrect, for the students to identify. If the date is written incorrectly, a student must correct it. (Note: I usually let all grades, 2–4, participate in writing. In my school, students begin writing in the target language even in first grade.)

Turn to someone in the class and inquire about his/her birthdate. Encourage the student to respond in a sentence, *Mi cumpleaños es el cinco de junio.* (My birthday is June fifth.) Use a marker to write the student's name and the number "5" on the appropriate color birthday cake (red for boys, green for girls). See Figure 1.

Place a small piece of double-

Figure 1. Laminated birthday cake cut-out, with student's name and birthdate

In a target-language dialogue with José about his birthdate, the teacher presents a birthday cake to José, who then places it in his birthday month on the classroom graph.

sided tape on the birthday cake and have the student come up and place his/her cake in the correct month column on the graph.

Guide this student to ask someone else when his/her birthday is. *¿Cuándo es tu cumpleaños?* (When is your birthday?) and have the next student answer, *Mi cumpleaños es el _____ de _____.* (My birthday is the _____ of _____.) and place the birthday cake in the appropriate column. Continue this question-answer practice until all have had a turn to say in a sentence their own birthdate, as well as to ask another student about his/her birthday, and everyone has a red or green birthday cake on the graph.

Again model using Paco and ask him, *¿Cuándo es el cumpleaños de Julia?* (When is Julia's birthday?). Have Paco answer and then have him pose the same question to another student, *¿Cuándo es el cumpleaños de Guillermo?* (When is William's birthday?). Continue in this manner, with a student answering and in turn asking about another student's birthdate.

After the cakes are all posted, give children the opportunity to resporid to a variety of questions, reinforcing their graphing and language skills:

¿Cuántos muchachos tienen su cumpleaños en julio? (How many boys have birthdays in July?)

¿En qué mes hay más cumpleaños, agosto o marzo? (In what month are there more birthdays, August or March?)

¿En qué mes no hay cumpleaños? (In what month are there no birthdays?)

Assessment:

1. Have class members draw a name of a classmate and make a birthday card for that person. Have them share their cards when they are finished by individually coming to the front of the class, holding up the birthday card, showing it to the class, and telling when the birthday of the child is. *El cumpleaños de Roberto es el seis de abril.* (Robert's birthday is the sixth of April.) Have the student who read the card present it to the student for whom it was made and introduce the next student by asking in the target language, When is Isabel's birthday? The person who made a card for Isabel comes up and, thus, the presentations continue.

2. Make true-false statements concerning the lesson (birthday customs discussed, birthdates from graph, etc.). Have students respond with *Verdad* (True) or *Mentira* (False).

   Examples:

   La piñata es parte de las fiestas de cumpleaños en México. (The *piñata* is part of birthday parties in Mexico.)

   Tres personas tienen sus cumpleaños en mayo. (Three people have birthdays in May.)

   El color verde en el gráfico representa las muchachas. (The color green on the graph represents the girls.)

3. Divide the class into two teams that take turns to make a true or false statement regarding any part of the lesson.

   Examples:

   El tres de febrero es el cumpleaños de María. (February third is Maria's birthday.)

   El doce de abril no es el cumpleaños de Jaime. (April twelfth is not James's birthday.)

   A member of the opposite team responds *Verdad* or *Mentira*. If the student answers incorrectly, he must sit down. The team at the end of class with the most players standing wins.

Classroom Resources

French

Resnick, J. P. (1996). French text by Marthe Faubert. *Zoom Nature: Les araignées. Les requins. Les chats. Les serpents.* Ontario, Canada: Les éditions Scholastic.

Available through Sosnowski Associates, 58 Sears Road, Wayland, MA 01778. 800-437-7161; Fax: 508-358-6687. Cost is $8.99.

This book, part of a marvelous series of nature books, answers all the questions you or your students may ever have had about spiders, sharks, cats (and big cats), and snakes. This series is published by Scholastic and is translated from English. Although many teachers prefer books originally written in the target language, this series is so informative, the photographs are so lively, and the material so intelligently organized that it can be recommended without reservation.

These reference sources are particularly useful when used to supplement a nature lesson. They offer a wealth of pictures and accurate language that describes aspects of animal life for which most of us have a limited vocabulary. There is much to learn here about shark varieties, the mating habits of poisonous snakes, and how spiders spin webs. Your students will love to look at the photographs even though the text is too difficult for them to decipher.

You will also enjoy another volume in this series, which is about whales and dolphins.

German

Grimm's Fairy Tales and Other German Videos for Children. Indianapolis, IN: German Language Video Center.

Available from The German Language Video Center, 7624 Pendleton Pike, Indianapolis, IN 46226-5298; 800-252-1957; Fax: 317-547-1263; Web site: www.germanvideo.com. Cost for videos varies from $19.95 to $24.95.

Everybody likes videos—so this review is about German videos—lots of them! The German Language Video Center has the most comprehensive selection of German videos in the United States. All have been digitally transferred to the US-NTSC television standard and can be played on U.S. videocassette players.

The videos most useful for elementary school German classes are the ones of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales. Some, such as *Hansel and Gretel* and *Snow White*, are presented by a German storyteller and performed by child actors. Others, such as *Cinderella* and *Little Red Riding Hood*, are animated. All videos are in color and each is 30–40 minutes long.

These videos can be used to develop varied, related lessons. For example, you could begin by reading *Hansel and Gretel*, then decorate a gingerbread house, show the videotape, retell the story, write and illustrate the story as a group, act out the story, or even invite students to write their own fairy tales in German.

Many of the animated videotapes about the Brothers Grimm fairy tales have four different stories per tape. The videos are easily understood and give students an insight into German culture. All videos in the catalogue are

also for rent by mail for 30–60 days. You can find detailed descriptions about these and many other German videos on the company's website.

Spanish

León, L. (1993). *The Spanish animated-alphabet handbook.* La Mesa, CA: J. Stone Creations.

Available from Edumate Educational Materials, 2231 Morena Blvd., San Diego, CA 92110; 619-275-7117; Fax: 619-275-7120. Cost is $39.99 (includes handbook and cassette).

If you should be interested in teaching phonics in your elementary school foreign language classroom, *The Spanish Animated-Alphabet Handbook* is an exciting program for teaching children to read "through their muscles along with their eyes and ears." Each letter of the alphabet is illustrated by an alphabet character, a story, a song, and an action, or "phonetic sign," for the letter sound. For example, *Leonardo León* introduces the word *leer* (to read) with the gesture of pretending to read a book. Leonardo's story, which can be sung to the tune of *"Fray Felipe,"* is illustrated with additional actions. (A cassette of the songs is part of this package.)

A Leonardo León, A Leonardo León
Form a circular crown overhead with hands.
Le gusta leer, le gusta leer
Pretend to read a book.
Cuando se levanta, cuando se levanta
Make a rising motion with both hands.
Se lava la cara, se lava la cara
Pretend to wash your face with your hands.
Va a su lancha, va a su lancha
Pretend to hold the sides of a boat and rock from side to side.
Come limón, come limón
Hold hand in front of mouth as if eating a lemon and make a sour expression.
Se vuelve a su casa, se vuelve a su casa
Make an outward motion with open hands and then back toward your chest.
Y lee más y más, y lee más y más.
Pretend to read a book.

The author suggests that teachers emphasize the action (reading a book) used to "sign" the character's sound "L." He stresses the concrete bond formed between letter sounds and the symbols used to spell them when children simultaneously view the character or letter, perform an action, and voice the sound. The children can also color the black-and-white line drawings of each animal or character. The handbook contains complete instructions for using the Animated-Alphabet, including research and information on why the program is successful, strategies for integrating literature, using the signs and sounds in context with traditional songs, blending sounds and reading words, introducing common nouns, "signing and sounding out" common nouns, writing sentences, and using predictable pattern songs and literature.

A step-by-step lesson plan gives suggestions for introducing the alphabet character and its song. At the end of the book a variety of Spanish word lists are included (nouns that name objects, nouns that can be illustrated or matched with toys, common verbs, words used to describe objects and actions, words that begin with all of the letters of the alphabet, and suggestions of objects for the "toy box" that begin with each letter). There are also illustrations of words/sounds to create a "Spanish word wall."

This program incorporates many ideas for additional activities. The author also encourages the teacher to invent new actions and play with new songs. It promises to be a fun way to learn the sounds in Spanish as well as internalize a wealth of vocabulary and phrases.

The Nation's Plans for a Report Card on Foreign Languages—and NNELL's Recommendations

What is NAEP?

Often called the "Nation's Report Card," the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only nationally representative, continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Administered in grades four, eight, and twelve, NAEP plays an essential role in evaluating the conditions and progress of the nation's education enterprise. Since 1969, NAEP has conducted assessments periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, history, geography, and other fields. Both public and private school students are sampled and assessed.

As the "Nation's Report Card," NAEP provides:

- A state-of-the-art measure of the condition of education in our schools
- Thirty years of data, showing patterns and trends of student achievement in core content areas
- A valid, reliable, and objective measure of today's educational standards
- An objective indicator for gauging the impact of national and state reform efforts
- A reliable source of student assessment data that is regularly used by Congress, professional organizations, national and state policymakers, and the media.

Who is responsible for NAEP?

NAEP was established by the U.S. Congress. The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), also created by Congress, sets the policies that determine who will be assessed, when assessments will occur, and how results will be reported. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is responsible for overseeing the operations and implementation of the assessment. Specific tasks related to the NAEP are handled by outside contractors.

The NAEP Foreign Language Assessment 2003

In 1994 Congress recognized the importance of foreign language study, formalizing it in the Goals 2000 statement of the National Education Goals. NAGB, as part of its NAEP oversight role, has targeted the year 2003 for the first foreign language NAEP. It will be administered to secondary school students only. For the first time, the United States will have a comprehensive national source of information on what its students know and can do in foreign language.

Developing the framework for this national assessment is a critical task, presenting an unprecedented opportunity to foster national discussion and build national consensus, both within the foreign language community and across government, business, industry, and the general public, on the role of foreign language education in America's future.

The Foriegn Language NAEP Consensus-building Project

In May 1999, NAGB awarded a contract to the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), working with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the American Institutes for Research

(AIR), to conduct its national consensus-building project. The goal of this project is to make recommendations to NAGB for the 2003 foreign language assessment. Specifically, a Project Management Team directs the work of a Steering Committee, a Planning Committee, and a Technical Advisory Panel to make recommendations on the following:

- A framework for the assessment
- Test and item specifications based on the framework
- Preliminary achievement levels
- A strategy for sampling students
- Background variables to be collected from students, teachers, and school administrators
- A strategy for reporting the NAEP results.

Project Timeline

Spring 1999: Issues Paper prepared.

Summer 1999: Consensus committee meetings held to consider the issues and to develop recommendations for the assessment framework and specifications. First draft of the framework and specifications prepared.

Fall 1999: Period of national review of draft framework and specifications.

Winter 1999: Full recommendations for the assessment framework, item specifications, background questions, and reporting strategies prepared and submitted to NAGB.

Spring 2000: NAGB takes final actions on recommendations.

How to get more information on NAEP

For additional information about NAEP, contact:

National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
(202) 219-1844 or (202) 219-1690
nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard

National Assessment Governing Board
800 N. Capitol Street, NW - Suite 825
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 357-6941
www.nagb.org

NNELL Develops Recommendations for 2003 Foreign Language Assessment

Immediately following ACTFL '99, at which a session on the NAEP Foreign Language Assessment was held, the Executive Board of NNELL developed and approved a recommendation to the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) that oversees NAEP. NNELL's recommendation is that NAGB reconsider its decision to administer the first foreign language NAEP to secondary students only, and instead, assess students in grades four, eight, and twelve, as is done with other subject content areas. (For the text of NNELL's statement, see the following page.)

Note: *The information about NAEP is reprinted from the following Web site: www.cal.org/flnaep.*

NNELL's Response to Plans for the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress in Foreign Languages

The Executive Board of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL) urges the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), which oversees the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), to reconsider its decision to limit the first foreign language NAEP in the year 2003 to secondary students only. NNELL, an organization of over 1,000 educators nationwide committed to promoting opportunities for children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to their own, urges that the foreign language NAEP be carried out in the same way as other subject content area NAEP—in grades four, eight, and twelve.

While studies report that the most common foreign language experience of K–12 students today is two years of study at the high school level, the profession is committed to providing all students with extended sequences of language study, beginning in the early grades. A recent national study revealed that elementary school students studying a foreign language had increased almost 10 percent between 1987 and 1997. This increase came about before the impact of the K–12, now K–16, national foreign language student standards and before the impact of brain research, which is interpreted by the public to mean that students must start the study of a second language early in life.

Certainly the trend nationally is to establish long sequences of foreign language study that begin in the early grades. To limit the NAEP study to students in the twelfth grade is a powerful message to the public that seems to say the early study of a foreign language is not important enough to assess.

The Executive Board of the National Network for Early Language Learning urges the National Assessment Governing Board to administer the foreign language assessment planned for 2003 to students in grades four, eight, and twelve.

Respectfully submitted,

Executive Board
National Network for Early
Language Learning
11/30/99

Calendar

Spring 2000 Conferences

April 13–16, 2000
Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Washington, DC. Northeast Conference, Dickinson College, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; 717-245-1977; Fax: 717-245-1976; E-mail: nectfl@dickinson.

Summer 2000 Courses and Workshops

June 15–19, 2000
National FLES Institute II. University of Maryland Baltimore County. Gladys Lipton, 1000 Hilltop Cir., Baltimore, MD 21250; 301-231-0824; Fax: 301-230-2652; E-mail: lipton@umbc2.umbc.edu.

June 18–July 14, 2000
Methods for Elementary and Middle School Foreign Languages. Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. Carol Ann Pesola Dahlberg, Old Main 109B, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN 56562; 218-299-4511; Fax: 218-299-4454; E-mail: cadahlbe@cord.edu.

June 19–23, 2000
National FLES Institute I. University of Maryland Baltimore County. Gladys Lipton, 1000 Hilltop Cir., Baltimore, MD 21250; 301-231-0824; Fax: 301-230-2652; E-mail: lipton@umbc2.umbc.edu.

June 25–July 2, 2000
French Teaching Methodology and Quebec Culture, Université de Montréal, Montréal, Canada. Elizabeth White, Linguahostel, 14 Edgewater Estates, Plattsburgh, NY 12901; 888-358-0093; Fax: 518-561-2166; E-mail: lhostel@together.net.

July 5–15, 2000
Temas Añejos: Recurring Themes in Ancient, Colonial, and Modern Latin America. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu. For more information and an application, see NFLRC Web site: www.educ.iastate.edu/nflrc.

July 24–August 3, 2000
K–6 Foreign Languages: Leading the Way with Teacher Preparation. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu. For more information and an application, see NFLRC Web site: www.educ.iastate.edu/nflrc.

August 5–13, 2000
New Technologies in the Foreign Language Classroom. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 For-

eign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu. For more information and an application, see NFLRC Web site: www.educ.iastate.edu/nflrc.

ERIC *Language Link:* An Online Newsletter

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics now publishes *Language Link*, a quarterly online newsletter. Each issue of *Language Link* focuses on a specific theme related to foreign language education, English as a second language, bilingual education, or linguistics. Profiles of relevant books, journals, and recent ERIC documents will follow a feature article on the theme. Each issue will also feature news from ERIC partners and the ERIC system, as well as information about upcoming conferences and links to organizations and publishers. To subscribe to *Language Link*, send a message to: langlink-on@mail-list.cal.org. Please leave the subject and message fields blank. You will then receive a welcome letter along with subscription information.

Other services offered by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (ERIC/CLL) include a popular question-answering service; a Web site that includes FAQs, resource guides, and information digests on topics in language education; a semiannual print newsletter; and directories, monographs, and other publications.

ERIC/CLL is operated by the Center for Applied Linguistics with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and National Library of Education. For more information about ERIC/CLL products and services, visit www.cal.org/ericcll.

NNELL is an organization for educators involved in teaching foreign languages to children. The mission of the organization is to promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to their own. NNELL provides leadership, support, and service to those committed to early language learning and coordinates efforts to make language learning in programs of excellence a reality for all children.

NNELL works to accomplish this mission through activities that improve public awareness and support of early language learning. NNELL facilitates cooperation among organizations directly concerned with early language learning; facilitates communication among teachers, teacher educators, parents, program administrators, and policymakers; and disseminates information and guidelines to assist in developing programs of excellence.

NNELL holds its annual meeting at the fall conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Its officers are elected by members through a mail ballot election held annually in the spring.

NNELL is a member of JNCL-NCLIS (Joint National Committee for Languages/National Council for Languages and International Studies). Visit the NNELL website at: www.educ.iastate.edu/nnell

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Please enroll me as a member of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL) and send me a subscription to *Learning Languages* (receive all three issues for the 1999-2000 academic year). Enclosed is a check for $20.00. (Overseas rate is $25.00.) Make checks payable to NNELL.

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Learning Languages

The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning

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Learning Languages: The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning is the official publication of NNELL. It serves the profession by providing a medium for the sharing of information, ideas, and concerns among teachers, administrators, researchers, and others interested in the early learning of languages. The journal reflects NNELL's commitment to promoting opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language and culture in addition to their own. See the inside of the back cover for more information on NNELL.

In an effort to address the interests of the profession, both practical and scholarly articles are published. Practical articles describe innovative approaches to teaching and the administration of effective language programs for children. Scholarly articles report on original research and cite both current research and theory as a basis for making recommendations for practice. Scholarly articles are refereed, i.e., reviewed anonymously by at least three readers. Readers include members of the NNELL executive board, the editorial advisory board, and invited guest reviewers who have expertise in the area. Refereed articles are identified as such in the journal. Write to the editor to request a copy of author guidelines for preparing articles, or retrieve them from NNELL's website: www.educ.iastate.edu/nnell

Submissions: Deadlines are: fall issue—May 1; winter issue—Nov. 1; spring issue—Feb. 1. Articles, classroom activities, and materials may be submitted to the appropriate contributing editor (see below). Send announcements, conference information, and original children's work (such as line drawings, short stories, and poems) to the editor. Children's work needs to be accompanied by written permission from the child's parent or guardian and must include the child's name, age, school, and the teacher's name, address, and telephone (add fax and e-mail address, if available).

Submit a favorite classroom activity for the "Activities for Your Classroom" section by sending a description of the activity that includes title, context, objectives, targeted standards, materials, procedure, and assessment. Include pictures or drawings as illustration, if available. Send with your name, address, and phone number to the Classroom Activities editor listed below.

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Learning Languages

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Notes from the President

Many of you may be familiar with the commentary that appeared in the February 9, 2000, issue of *Education Week*. It questioned whether there is an advantage for young foreign language learners, and it set out to 'debunk some misconceptions' about the comparative ease with which children learn languages when compared with adults. If you read the article, you will recall that the authors claimed that there is no biological advantage for an early start, and that older learners can, indeed, be successful foreign language learners.

If looking solely at long-term language proficiency, are there advantages to an early start? Some studies suggest that starting younger is better in the long run than starting older. Some research has, on the other hand, shown that older learners learn faster. That should not surprise us. Adults and adolescents know more about the world, know more about using skills and strategies to produce successful school learning, and can use literacy as a tool for recording, remembering, storing, and retrieving information. My guess is that older learners probably learn social studies faster than younger learners too, but would anyone suggest that we therefore postpone introducing social studies into the curriculum until ninth grade? And, of course, we know that older learners can indeed learn new languages. Many people have successfully learned another language when older. If we didn't believe it possible, we wouldn't expect adult immigrants to master the language of their new country.

But what if it were true that older learners are faster and perhaps more successful language learners? What impact should such a claim make on us, advocates for an early start and continued sequence of language learning? It may be that the advantages to younger learners go well beyond those of ultimate level of language proficiency itself.

Here are some reasons why I find the arguments of an optimum age for language learning somewhat moot:

- There are documented cognitive and academic benefits to early second language learning, benefits that go beyond the second language itself. If second language learning is clearly good for your brain, why not begin to gain those benefits as early as possible?
- It is never too soon to develop positive attitudes toward people who speak other languages and represent other cultures. However, sometimes it can be too late.
- If a long sequence is the key to successful language learning, then starting young not only gives students more time, it also helps them see foreign language learning as an integral part of schooling, not a frill.
- The integration of content and language learning is most easily carried out in the early grades. Content-based language learning enhances both content and language development, requiring less time out for language. An early start facilitates content-based language instruction in later grades, because students have higher levels of language proficiency as they reach the grade levels where content comes to rely increasingly on verbal abstractions, discussions, and texts.

Researchers who study brain de-

velopment seem to differ on the implications of their findings for schooling. Some interpret the evidence to suggest there is a window of opportunity that facilitates language learning. Others believe that the evidence suggests that older learners simply use different parts of the brain, learning differently.

Maybe we should conclude from these differing interpretations that there are many good reasons to start early, and many reasons to why it's never too late.

Dr. Myriam Met
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Calling All Teachers! Are You Teaching through Video?

If you are currently using a video-based distance-learning program to teach foreign language to children in grades K–8, we would like to hear from you!

The Center for Applied Linguistics, as part of our work with the federally funded National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center at Iowa State University, is beginning a study to investigate the benefits and drawbacks of using distance-learning technology to teach languages to young children. The six most commonly used video-based distance-learning programs in U.S. elementary schools (such as those described in articles in this issue of *Learning Languages*) will be identified and examined in detail. The research questions for this project are the following:

- What are the characteristics of the distance-learning language programs for children and how are the programs being implemented?
- What are the goals of the programs?
- Are they successful in achieving their goals?
- Are any or all of the programs viable in providing the type of instruction that students need to meet the national standards?

Qualitative and quantitative data will be gathered from program developers and distributors, as well as from teachers, administrators, parents, and students involved in the program at individual schools and districts. Data will be gathered on the following aspects of each program—goals; expected outcomes; mode of instruction (e.g., use of puppets, classroom scenes, culturally authentic scenes from foreign countries); recommended usage (e.g., number of days per week, with or without language instructor); supplementary materials; implementation (how the program is being used in various sites); impressions of the program from classroom teachers, administrators, parents, and students; and results of student assessments and program evaluations.

An outcome of the study will be a practical guide about the overall benefits of video-based instruction for children and the pros and cons of each language program.

To be included in this exciting study, please send an e-mail to project director Nancy Rhodes at distancelearn@cal.org and include your name, address, and the name of the video program that you use.

Español para ti:
A Video Program That Works

Elena Steele, Foreign Language Specialist
Clark County School District
Las Vegas Nevada

Holly Johnson, Teacher on Special Assignment
Clark County School District
Las Vegas Nevada

The last ten years have reflected a tremendous expansion of the need for foreign language instruction in our schools. Certainly, the technological and informational explosions have created a demand for a trained, capable workforce with knowledge of more than one language, increasing the need for multilingual young people as they prepare to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

The introduction of foreign language instruction in early elementary school will provide our children this unique opportunity. They will learn a new language in a relaxed and nonthreatening atmosphere in which their oral/aural abilities can be easily enhanced. In this setting the new language is learned through songs, games, physical activities, attractive visual aids, and hand puppets. These materials and strategies provide a stimulating language learning environment that promotes enthusiasm and a desire to learn more.

History of Clark County's FLES Program

The elementary school foreign language program began in Clark County, Nevada, during the 1990–91 school year with the participation of 20 Spanish-conversant elementary teachers who wanted to introduce their 600+ primary students to the Spanish language and culture. The program was rapidly expanded during the 1993–94 school year, in which 80 enthusiastic teachers in kindergartens, first, and second grades at 40 sites taught Spanish to over 2,000 students. These students became familiar with greetings, farewells, courtesy expressions, classroom objects, colors, and the numbers 1–50. They learned to follow simple commands and sing and play in Spanish. And, most important, learning this new language helped these children to decrease misunderstandings due to cultural differences.

Development of Video Program, *Español para ti*

Despite the success of the classroom program, equity in education became an issue. There was a lack of Spanish-conversant teachers in the elementary schools. With the *Español para ti* classroom program, only 2% of the approximately 100,000 elementary students in Clark County were receiving foreign language instruction. To provide the opportunity for every child to learn Spanish, Clark County devised a seven-year action plan (see Table 1) to deliver Spanish language and cultural instruction to all elementary students in grades 1–5 via video.

The *Español para ti* video program was designed by Clark County's foreign language specialist for use by elementary teachers who do not speak Spanish. The video program allows elementary children and their teachers to learn Spanish as part of their classroom experience. Spanish is taught by

a certified Spanish teacher via video twice a week in a low-stress environment utilizing comprehensible input through visuals, games, and songs that are conducive to language acquisition. The video program consists of 60 15-minute lessons per grade level; a video guide with reinforcement activities for guided and individual practice, posters, and picture flashcards for interactive participation; and recorded activities and music for proper modeling. *Español para ti* was produced by the Clark County Elementary School Divisions in collaboration with KLVX Communication Group, Channel 10.

The *Español para ti* video program makes possible a one-hour per week enrichment experience for elementary school students. Grade-level teachers facilitate the viewing of two 15-minute video lessons a week and use the remaining time participating with their students in interactive classroom activities. This program aims to help children acquire native-like pronunciation of Spanish. In addition, as with any second language learning experience, it is expected that the exposure to Spanish will positively affect their cognitive development, mental flexibility, creativity, and divergent thinking. Furthermore, the *Español para ti* experience enhances the goals of multiculturalism and ethnic diversity in the elementary curriculum.

Over the five-year video series, students acquire a limited degree of proficiency in the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing basic Spanish. They learn basic vocabulary structures and expressions essential for everyday communication. Also, the students begin to understand and appreciate the cultures of Spanish-speaking people. As the grade levels progress, the vocabulary becomes increasingly sophisticated, and children are able to produce their own language within a limited scope. Reading and writing skills are developed in grades 3–5.

The curriculum outlined in the

The *Español para ti* video program makes possible a one-hour per week enrichment experience for elementary school students.

Table 1: Action Plan Timeline

Year	Actions
1992–93	Create first-grade program. (Cadre of grade-level teachers, video teacher, and foreign language specialist collaborate to write developmentally appropriate lesson plans.)
1993–94	Pilot first-grade program. Create second-grade program. End of year, assess pilot and refine program prior to districtwide implementation.
1994–95	Implement first-grade program districtwide. Pilot second-grade program. Create third-grade video.
1995–96	Continue districtwide implementation schedule in first and second grades. Pilot third-grade program. Create fourth-grade video. Evaluate first-grade students.
1996–97	Continue districtwide implementation schedule in first, second, and third grades. Pilot fourth-grade program. Create fifth-grade video. Evaluate second grade.
1997–98	Continue districtwide implementation schedule in first, second, third, and fourth grades. Pilot fifth-grade video. Evaluate third grade.
1998–99	Implement all levels districtwide. Evaluate fourth-grade. Assess program efficacy by measuring student language proficiency.

Español para ti video guides is content related and correlated to each grade level. Teachers are given lesson plans stating the objectives and activities that correspond to each video lesson. A typical lesson consists of an opening conversation, a review and reinforcement of previous knowledge, presentation of new material, reinforcing activities, a music segment, and an appropriate closing. This program provides children with immediately applicable language related to the people, places, and things around them, thus motivating their desire to learn and giving them the confidence and willingness to use the Spanish language. The children learn basic vocabulary structures and expressions essential for every day communication. They learn to count and to express their everyday feelings. As the grade levels progress, the vocabulary becomes increasingly sophisticated, and the children are able to produce their own language within a limited scope.

Certainly, uneasiness about their role and feelings of inadequacy are very real among monolingual teachers.

Teacher Training

Certainly, uneasiness about their role and feelings of inadequacy are very real among monolingual teachers. From the outset, program facilitators confronted the challenge of helping classroom teachers facilitate language acquisition even though the teachers lack knowledge of the target language. Establishing a partnership between the program creators and the facilitating teachers has helped the teachers to understand that language acquisition takes place over time when there is ample opportunity for review and repetition. Teachers are relieved to know that they can rely on the video and accompanying audio activities to model the language correctly and that they do not need to know the language in order to facilitate the video program. We encourage teachers not to translate. They come to understand that all language learners experience moments of frustration and that neither they nor the students need to understand every word for comprehension to occur.

To support teachers, the program facilitators have designed training on the use of the video program and its accompanying materials, as well as professional development courses in beginning Spanish. Training efforts focus on preparing teachers to be active participants with their students. Teachers are offered an initial two-hour workshop to prepare them for effective use of the components of the program. Teachers assume the role of students as the program facilitators model for them the use of the video and audio components of the program. Facilitators encourage consistent presentation, enthusiastic participation, and effective implementation of activities. Teachers and facilitators participate in interactive video viewing and hands-on activities. Though the video program is part of the elementary curriculum, the training for its use is voluntary. Those teachers who do not attend training are required to view a 60-minute training video and answer a questionnaire.

In the second semester, teachers have the opportunity to participate in grade-level sharing sessions. They interact with grade-level colleagues, sharing their challenges and solutions. Many teachers also choose to attend basic Spanish classes offered in the school district and in the community. It is rewarding to observe that many teachers' fears are put to rest as their students gain language skills and multicultural perspectives.

Evaluation

Since 1996 a number of schools have been identified to participate in annual evaluations and assessments of the program. These schools constitute a sampling used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the video instruction. Evaluation tools consist of teacher and student attitude surveys and language-comprehension tests. The data indicate that students across grade levels are retaining approxi-

mately 75%–80% of the vocabulary and language structures presented in the program. Testing completed in 1999 indicates that fourth grade students retain 83% of the vocabulary and language structures.

Attitude surveys reveal that students and teachers respond positively to the video instruction, that students enjoy using their new language skills, and that content-related instruction is appropriate for learning a foreign language. Additionally, students demonstrate increased awareness of Hispanic culture and an understanding of the interrelationships between the languages and the cultures.

Conclusion

This program may be duplicated by any school district with a strong commitment to elementary school Spanish education. There is much potential in distance-learning programs that attempt to give every student the unique opportunity of foreign language enrichment. Learning a foreign language can be a key to multicultural awareness, is important for our national security, and is an invaluable asset to our economic well being. Quality programs can lead us to excellence in education and make early foreign language instruction a reality for all who desire it.

Note: *Further information about this program is available through Elena Steele, Foreign Language Specialist, Clark County School, 601 North Ninth, Las Vegas, Nevada 89101; 702-799-8404; Fax: 702-799-8452.* Español para ti *is now available through NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group. For further information, call 1-800-323-4900.*

Attend the NNELL Swapshop at ACTFL!

The National Network for Early Language Learning is sponsoring the annual FLES Swapshop Breakfast on Saturday, November 18, 8:00 - 9:30 A.M. at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Conference, to be held at Boston's Hynes Convention Center.

Join your colleagues for a breakfast of juice, pastries, eggs, bacon, potatoes, and coffee/tea. You will have the opportunity to discuss effective teaching techniques and resources for the K-8 classroom.

Please bring 250 copies of a one-page teaching activity to share. Follow the format used in "Activities for Your Classroom," which appears regularly in *Learning Languages*. Include your name and address; language and grade level; lesson topic; objectives (language, content, thinking skills, culture, key vocabulary); materials; description of activity; and assessment. Publishers' FLES materials will also be displayed at the breakfast.

Registration Information

Cost: $23.50 per person, Advance Registration
$28.00 per person, On-site Registration, **LIMITED** to space available

Contact: ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801; 914-963-8830; Fax: 914-963-1275; E-mail: actflhq@aol.com; Website: http://www.actfl.org

Language and Culture through *SALSA*

Greg Duncan
President
Interprep, Inc.
Marietta, Georgia

Introduction

Today, more than ever, the American public is aware of the need for children to have the ability to use languages other than English. Constantly changing demographics and an ever-increasing need for U.S.–based businesses to market their goods and services internationally spur this awareness. Since public education in this country mirrors the values of our society, the clearest manifestation of this awareness is probably the increase in foreign language course offerings in American schools. A recent study by the Center for Applied Linguistics, based in Washington, DC, reveals record numbers of students enrolled in K–12 foreign language study. The lion's share of the reported increases is at the elementary school level: from 22% in 1987 to 31% in 1997.

As more and more foreign language programs take root at the elementary school level, of course more foreign language teachers are needed at this level. Given that the demand for foreign language teachers generally has been high for nearly two decades, the need today for more foreign language teachers is severe at all levels. It is probably even more difficult to meet the need at the elementary school level, where the teacher must know not only the foreign language but also developmentally appropriate methods and materials for teaching language to young children.

So, what can be done to bridge this gap between a well-founded desire to increase foreign language study for America's young children and an inadequate teacher force? One answer lies in creative use of distance-learning media. The emphasis on acquiring technological resources has resulted in schools that are rich in educational technology. It is not uncommon to find schools in which televisions and videoplayers/recorders exist in every classroom; many classrooms tout several computers with CD-ROMs and Internet capability; and most schools contain at least one computer lab.

Creation of *SALSA*

To help meet the need for elementary school foreign language programs, Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB), a leader in distance-learning programming, created a video-based series of unprecedented quality. For a host of reasons, Spanish was chosen as the language to be taught. GPB convened a nationally recognized task force of leaders in Spanish language education, foreign language instructional supervision, early childhood education, and television production to guide the conceptual development of this two-year series. This Spanish language and culture program can be used 1) in classrooms where the regular elementary teacher does not know Spanish; 2) in classrooms of trained elementary school Spanish teachers as a supplement to their instructional program; and 3) in homes by interested parents, either as part of

a home-school instructional offering or as after-school enrichment.

Thus, *SALSA* was born. Its primary intent is to provide elementary school students in pre-kindergarten through second grade their first experience with Spanish language and culture. This paves the way for favorable decisions to be made for future language study and also instills in students an appreciation and respect for cultures and people who are different from themselves and their culture.

Reflecting advice and counsel from the task force, the design team for this series developed a language learning program that is based on video lessons (intended to introduce language and culture appropriate to the young learner) and follow-up activities that aim to encourage students to reflect and expand on what they see and hear in the video lessons. To appeal immediately to the young audience, initial *SALSA* video lessons are based on familiar traditional stories and characters—among them "The Three Bears," "Little Red Riding Hood," and "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." However, the videos take a fresh approach by adding an appealing mix of distinctive new characters and adventures supported by animation and field production. As children progress through the videos, the stories become less anchored in familiar contexts, but the characters remain those that the viewers have come to know and love.

SALSA Content

Each program includes a story in three acts, staged by puppets. Animation and field segments separate each act. Every episode features two or three vocabulary words that link all of the video segments. Carefully selected by the curriculum design team, these words reflect relevance to the story and are considered high-frequency vocabulary for a child. They are carefully and intentionally woven through succeeding episodes to ensure that children receive a spiraled approach to language acquisition.

Each *SALSA* episode begins with a brief, lively introduction in English so children have a frame from which to anticipate what they will see and hear. The program host, along with one or two of the puppet characters, provides this introduction. *SALSA* is "Spanish only;" no English is used in the program after the short introduction. Student comprehension of the videos is possible because *SALSA* is visually exciting, with funny characters that children enjoy, in situations children quickly recognize and understand. The language is clearly visualized in clever and imaginative ways, making the programs always easy to understand.

The focus vocabulary words for the series follow a carefully planned pattern of introduction and use. For example, focus vocabulary for Lesson 5 will actually be introduced in Lesson 4 (that is, they will be used in context at least three times); the words will be used extensively in context throughout Lesson 5; and, they will be used several times in Lesson 6. The curriculum team maintains a database of word-use frequency to ensure that all vocabulary words are constantly rewoven throughout the video episodes.

Not only do the selected stories and their creative spin-off tales provide the context for everyday vocabulary that students need to acquire, they also offer a natural context for the introduction of cultural themes into the language learning experience. For example, as children watch the roles and relationships of puppet family members, they are also exposed to video clips showing family interactions in Hispanic homes in the United States as well as abroad. Through the use of "field trips" within local communities and "international postcards" actually created on location in the Dominican Republic, Chile, and Mexico by *SALSA* producers, students receive rich and varied cultural information that reflects the tremendous variety

SALSA is "Spanish only;" no English is used in the program after the short introduction.

the Spanish-speaking world offers. Each video lesson has an identified cultural objective that springs out of the story and puppet segments and is then magnified through the field trips and the international postcards.

Implementation

While its implementation is dependent upon time available in each school setting, *SALSA* has been envisioned for a 15-minute daily class segment. Every other day the instruction is video-based; that is, the entire 15 minutes is used for the video itself. Instruction on alternating days centers around specially designed activities that help students use some of the language presented in the video. Recognizing that young children are active learners drawing from direct experiences, *SALSA* uses captivating television production techniques paired with age-appropriate instructional follow-up activities to ensure that young learners have the opportunity to explore and apply their new learning to their understanding of the world around them.

For every *SALSA* lesson the accompanying guide of follow-up activities provides a range of active learning experiences to support young viewers. The guide, which is intended for educators, parents, and other adults, is written in a user-friendly manner and may be used in school-based learning settings, in after-school programs, or in the home. The activities, called REFLEX (Reinforcing and Extending Foreign Language Experiences), are designed for easy implementation and often make use of commonly found materials and objects. Since young children learn in many different ways, the REFLEX program presents a broad range of activities to support the learning of any child engaged with the *SALSA* series.

Non-Hispanic children gained appreciation of and respect for Hispanic people and cultures by watching *SALSA*.

Evaluation

Georgia Public Television contracted with the Division of Educational Studies at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, to evaluate the effectiveness of *SALSA* in regard to generating viewer interest, promoting cultural appreciation, and facilitating Spanish-language acquisition. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected from children and staff at rural and urban elementary schools and after-school programs and from home viewers.

Major findings of the research (Mirel, Hughes, & Strickland, 1998) follow:

- *Viewer Interest:* The extent to which children enjoyed *SALSA* and were attentive while watching *SALSA* were studied. Findings showed that

  1) Enjoyment of *SALSA* was high for school programs, after-school programs, and home settings. Pre-kindergarten through first grade children exhibited the most positive response to *SALSA*.
  2) The majority of children found "nothing" unappealing about *SALSA*, and considered the following characteristics to be appealing: a) the opportunity to learn Spanish, b) the characters on the show, c) the use of familiar stories, d) the show's variety format, e) the use of humor, and f) the use of repetition.

- *Cultural Appreciation:* Data relating to cultural appreciation were collected from educators' questionnaires and interviews, student interviews, and home viewer daily checklists and questionnaires. Findings related to cultural appreciation include these:

  1) *SALSA* portrayed Hispanic people and cultures positively.
  2) Non-Hispanic children gained appreciation of and respect for Hispanic people and cultures by watching *SALSA*.
  3) Hispanic children gained self-esteem and cultural pride from watching *SALSA*.
  4) *SALSA* promoted interaction between non-Hispanic and Hispanic children.

- *Foreign Language Acquisition:* The evaluation focused on the acquisition of Spanish as a foreign language. Findings related to foreign language acquisition by non-Spanish speaking children are that

  1) *SALSA* helped children with limited Spanish-language skills acquire core Spanish vocabulary.
  2) *SALSA* reinforced the skills of children who had an existing knowledge of Spanish.
  3) Children used Spanish vocabulary they learned from *SALSA* in other contexts.
  4) *SALSA* exposed teachers to core Spanish words and phrases.

Conclusion

Georgia Public Broadcasting is proud of its record of producing high-quality, award-winning foreign language distance-learning materials. Building on the success of *Irasshai*, its two-year for-credit high school course in Japanese language and culture, and *Irrashai Explorer*, a middle school exploratory course in Japanese language and culture, GPB is able to combine the power of enormous creative talent from the television production field with some of the best and most respected minds of the foreign language and early childhood education fields to offer a viable alternative for the teaching of meaningful second language experiences to American elementary school students.

Reference

Mirel, J. E., Hughes, M. A., & Strickland, W. J. (1998). *Evaluation report: SALSA educational programming.* Emory University, Atlanta, GA: Division of Educational Studies.

Note: *For further information contact: http://www.gpb.org.*

Notes from NNELL

☑ Nominations Open

NNELL Executive Board for Fall 2000

NNELL is currently seeking nominees for the position of second vice-president. The second vice-president serves a one-year term, then succeeds to first vice-president, president, and past-president, serving for a total of four years. Nominees must be current NNELL members. It is essential that a nominee, if selected, be able to attend the annual board meeting, which is held one or two days prior to the ACTFL annual meeting in November.

Nominations should be made in the form of a letter and should include the nominee's name, home address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

Please address letters of nomination to Christine Brown, Glastonbury Board of Education, 2323 Williams Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033. Please fax them no later than July 30, 2000, to Christy at 860-652-7978 or e-mail them to cbrownglas@aol.com. Results will be announced in the Fall 2000 issue of *Learning Languages*.

$$ New Membership Rates $$

Please note NNELL's new rates! The NNELL Board voted to increase the rates from $20 to $25 for U.S. members and from $25 to $30 for overseas members, for the 2000–01 school year. These rates will help to better cover the costs of the publishing of this journal and other NNELL expenses. We look forward to receiving your renewal. Please help us keep our expenses down by sending in your renewal with the notice on the back cover. Thanks!

Diary of a State Foreign Language Lobbyist

Cathie Hodges
Executive Director
Alliance for Language Learning
Troy, North Carolina

Mary Lynn Redmond
Associate Professor of Education
Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

North Carolina has launched a statewide advocacy plan that endeavors to promote K–12 foreign language instruction in every school district. Since 1985 North Carolina has had a mandated component of its Basic Education Program (GS #115C-81) that calls for all children to study a foreign language in grades K–5, with the opportunity for continued study through grade 12. However, the State Board of Education has not enforced the mandate, and the General Assembly that supported the Basic Education Program did not appropriate the funding needed for successful implementation of the K–12 program. As a result, the state that leads the nation in early foreign language study is now confronting the challenge of maintaining its existing programs and providing a sequence of study in grades K–12.

In response to the decline of foreign language programs in the elementary grades, the Foreign Language Association of North Carolina (FLANC) and the Foundation for International Education (FIE) joined efforts in 1997 to take positive steps to increase opportunities for foreign language study in grades K–12. The Foundation for International Education is a small group of leaders from business and higher education who are interested in promoting foreign languages in the schools of North Carolina. Representatives from FLANC and FIE collaborated for a year on foreign language advocacy goals. In 1998 they established the Alliance for Language Learning, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote and advocate foreign language study for all North Carolina children in grades K–12.

The Alliance is governed by a Board of Directors that is made up of representatives from FLANC and FIE, as well as state leaders from business and higher education. In 1999 the board hired an executive director, Cathie Hodges, to spearhead the organization's projects and to serve as the lobbyist for foreign language study in North Carolina. A former French teacher, Cathie brings to the Alliance many years of experience as an educator and foreign language advocate. Although not yet a registered lobbyist, Cathie has been using *The Nonprofit Lobbying Guide* (Smucker, 1999) as a source of information on topics varying from lobbying through the media, to how to communicate effectively with legislators through e-mail. The next portion of this article highlights some of the work that Cathie has accomplished since becoming executive director, and it describes how the Alliance is moving forward with serious commitment to foreign language study in North Carolina.

Monday, October 4, 1999

Made preparations for upcoming meetings with state legislators, school board members, business people, and other decisionmakers to keep them apprised of the status of foreign language study in North Carolina. Assembled advocacy packets, one set for legislators and another for the business community. Began writing letter to the editor about the decrease in foreign language enrollment; will be mailed to newspapers and business publications across the state. Telephoned three people to request their assistance in establishing advocacy groups in their regions of the state. Researched current statistics about imports and exports in North Carolina to use as background information in meeting with state legislators.

Tuesday, October 5, 1999

Left home at 7 A.M. and drove 100 miles to Raleigh (state capital). Conferred with Fran Hoch, Chief Consultant of Foreign Languages at the State Department of Public Instruction, before walking over to the Legislative Office Building. Met with selected representatives and senators who serve on Education Appropriations Committees to discuss declining enrollment in foreign language programs in the elementary grades, the importance of early language study, and the impact of foreign language proficiency on North Carolina's global economy. Was surprised to learn that these legislators were unaware of the decrease in enrollment and was pleased that they responded favorably to my request for their support in upcoming discussions about legislation regarding foreign language education study. Left packets of information about the Alliance for Language Learning. Will follow up at the end of the week with telephone calls and/or e-mail messages, reminding legislators to support legislation that will benefit language learning in the public schools and to call on the Alliance as a resource for further information.

Wednesday, October 6, 1999

Attended State Board of Education meeting in Raleigh that included the presentation of the revised *North Carolina Second Language Standard Course of Study* (Public Schools of North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2000). During breaks, talked with two Board members and gave each one an Alliance advocacy packet and invited them to lunch next week to discuss the current status of foreign language study in North Carolina.

Thursday, October 7, 1999

Completed letter to the editor about the decline in early language study in North Carolina and mailed it to approximately 70 major newspapers and business journals in the state. Researched via Internet current statistics about the enrollment in early language programs in the United States. Planned a Power Point presentation about the Alliance for Language Learning for two sessions at the fall conference of the Foreign Language Association of North Carolina. Began preparing contents of 200 Alliance advocacy packets and information to share about how to become an effective advocate. Made checklist of contents: contact information for North Carolina's legislators and Congressional delegation, sample copies of letters to lawmakers, copies of research articles on

the value of early language learning, and one of my original posters depicting the importance of early language study. Prepared a handout of talking points for advocates to use in discussions with parents, school board members, business people, etc.

Friday, October 8, 1999

Made 12 follow-up telephone calls to legislators and members of the State Board of Education. Arranged two appointments with School Board members and one senator. Contacted board members of the Alliance for Language Learning with an update on recent advocacy work completed and in-progress. Began preparations for the next board meeting of the Alliance for Language Learning.

Wednesday, February 9, 2000

Completed site arrangements at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro for the April 1 training workshop for chairs of local advocacy committees. Met in Burlington, NC, with three members of the Alliance Board of Directors to plan April 1 workshop.

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Attended Triad Leadership Network's Economic Development Day in Eden, NC, an important connection with business and industry for the Alliance. Heard reports from 12 counties about important issues facing North Carolina's Piedmont Triad region. Spoke to participants and leaders about the importance of early language learning and its impact on regional economy. Distributed approximately 50 Alliance for Language Learning brochures.

Saturday, April 1, 2000

Conducted state workshop for training chairs of local advocacy committees; had assistance from four members of the Board of Directors of the Alliance. Parents and educators from six school districts participated in the training session to be able to establish a local chapter of the Alliance in each district. Provided materials and steps to organize and carry out a strategic advocacy plan for each district. Established deadlines and reporting procedures to the Board of Directors for 2000–01.

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Responded to early morning phone call from a state legislator about a bill introduced in the House of Representatives (HB1799) that requested a joint study by the Education Oversight Committee on the issue of foreign language in the elementary schools of North Carolina. Sent an e-mail alert to 85 individuals across the state requesting that they write letters to their legislators for support of HB1799. Attended groundbreaking and dinner to celebrate Homanit, USA, Inc., a new German company that is building its first North American factory in rural Montgomery County, NC. Spoke with the wife of the company's CEO who was interested in discussing the importance of early language learning for her two young children. Made appointment to meet with her about beginning a Montgomery County Chapter of the Alliance for Language Learning. Foreign language advocacy efforts continue across the state of North Carolina. . . .

The Alliance for Language Learning is a nonprofit corporation comprised of leaders in higher education, the business community, and foreign language educators who are interested in promoting foreign language study in grades K–12 in North Carolina. The Alliance and the executive director's part-time salary are funded by the Foreign Language Association of North Carolina, the Foundation for International Education, and external grants. The Alliance is governed by a Board of Directors that meets six times a year including a two-day summer planning retreat. The Alliance received funding from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation in February 2000 for partial support of Alliance projects during the year 2000, including the establishment of local foreign language advocacy groups.

The mission of the Alliance for Language Learning is to promote foreign language programs in communities throughout the state of North Carolina, thereby providing opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language and culture in addition to their own. The goals for the Strategic Plan 2000 are to establish a presence at the state and local levels, and to raise public awareness about the value of foreign language study. These goals will be accomplished through the establishment and work of the local advocacy committees across the state and Cathie Hodges's leadership role as the state's foreign language lobbyist.

In the next five years, the Alliance hopes to establish a local advocacy committee in each school district. The chairs of the local committees will be called the State Council of the Alliance for Language Learning and will participate in meetings of the Alliance. Members of the local committees will be outside the field of foreign language education and will include parents, school board members, business leaders, and educators who are interested in promoting foreign language. The goals of local committees will include the following:

1. Stay abreast of the status of early language study in the local school district.
2. Promote and encourage language study among local decision-makers.
3. Become visible in the community as advocates and resources of information about foreign language study (by making presentations to local civic clubs, PTAs, and other civic organizations).
4. Communicate regularly with the Board and the Executive Director of the Alliance for Language Learning about the committee's work at the local level.

Having members of the local committees keep in touch with their area legislators will strengthen ties at the state level. Building linkages to local organizations is also important. North Carolina Citizens for Business and Industry is, for example, a powerful state organization made up of members of local business communities who are also members of the local Rotary, Lions, and Civitan Clubs. The local advocacy groups will be provided a Power Point presentation about the value of foreign language study to present to these and other civic organizations, as well as to local school boards, PTAs, etc.

While there is an increasing demand for foreign language skills throughout the state of North Carolina, the need for raising public awareness and advocacy for languages is evident as the number of early language programs in the public schools of North Carolina declines. Within the past four years, the number of elementary students studying foreign language in North Carolina has decreased from 328,110 (60%) to 167,219 (27%).

The state that once served as a national model for early language study is facing an astounding reversal in language progress. Ironically, at the same time, North Carolina is seeing a phenomenal need for increased language skills as international firms move to the state, bringing people from all over the world to live and work

there. According to the North Carolina Public Schools, there are approximately 170 languages spoken in North Carolina homes (Hoch, 2000). The increase in international influence is affecting both the urban and rural populations in the state. The economic development of the entire state depends on having a workforce that is prepared for the future needs of the global economy.

North Carolina's children deserve the opportunity to earn the best education its schools can provide. A continuous sequence of language study throughout a student's academic life will provide essential skills for working and living as global citizens. As advocates of language study in grades K–12, the Alliance for Language Learning serves as a resource and advisor for parents, communities, schools, businesses, and policymakers, and it is dedicated to providing quality foreign language programs for all students in North Carolina.

For further information about the Alliance for Language Learning, contact Cathie Hodges, Executive Director, Alliance for Language Learning, 469 Sugarloaf Road, Troy, NC 27371, 910-572-1101; E-mail: cthodges@ac.net.

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North Carolina Second Language Standard Course of Study. (2000). Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Smucker, B (1999). *The Nonprofit Lobbying Guide, Second Edition.* Independent Sector. http://www.indepsec.org/clpi.

Note: *The Nonprofit Lobbying Guide can be downloaded without cost from http://www.indepsec.org/clpi and a summary of federal rules about lobbying for 501(c)(3) organizations and other information relating to lobbying can be found on-line at http://www.nonprofits.org.*

Colorful Carp: IDL Japanese Language and Culture for Kids

Colleen Brooks
Southeast Kansas Education Service Center, Greenbush
Girard, Kansas

Context:

This lesson is part of a summer enrichment program in Japanese language and culture taught by Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) through the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center, Greenbush, one of seven regional education service centers in Kansas. The class is designed for students going into grades 4, 5, and 6 and runs two hours daily for two weeks. This lesson may be used with children who have had very little exposure to Japanese. They only need to know how to count to five and to be able to answer yes or no to questions.

Objectives:

At the end of this unit, students will

1. Be familiar with the Japanese vocabulary for colors and shapes, as well as correctly use Japanese vocabulary for several colors.
2. Understand the culture and practices of two Japanese children's holidays.

Targeted Standards:

Communication

1.1 Interpersonal Communication.
Students will say the colors in Japanese.

Cultures

2.2 Products and Perspectives of Culture.
Students will do a craft that represents a cultural concept.

Comparisons

4.2 Culture Comparisons.
Students will compare children's holidays in both cultures.

Materials:

1. Laminated construction paper in various colors cut into large and small circles, triangles, and squares.
2. Full sheets of colored tissue paper.
3. Multicolored tissue paper streamers approximately 1.5" x 15"
4. Magic markers, glue sticks, yarn scissors, and newspaper.
5. *A Carp for Kimiko* by Virginia Kroll. Charlesbridge Publishing, 85 Main Street, Watertown, MA 02172. 617-926-0329. ISBN 0-88106-412-2.

Vocabulary:

ookii (large), *chisaii* (small), *maru* (circle), *sankaku* (triangle), *shikaku* (square), *akai* (red), *aoi* (blue), *midori* (green), *shiroi* (white), *kuroi* (black), *kiiroi* (yellow), *orenji* (orange), *pinku* (pink), *chairoi* (brown), *ichi* (one), *ni* (two), *san* (three), *shi* (four), *go* (five).

Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) Environment and Technology:

Four schools participate in each two-week session. The classes are held in local high schools in classrooms specially equipped with cameras and four 27" TV monitors. Each IDL classroom has three cameras providing views of the students, the teacher, and documents, respectively. The document camera focuses on a small section of the teacher's desk and can be used to view any small objects (including students' crafts) as well as books, photographs, and documents. The teacher can switch from camera to camera with a single touch of a button. A control panel at the teacher's desk allows each camera to be moved right-left-up-down and to be zoomed in and out. One of the four monitors always displays the local site and each of the other three displays one of the remote sites. There are twelve students and an adult facilitator in each school. The teacher rotates among the four schools as distance allows and treats the 48 children as one united class that just happens to be in several physical locations.

The audio and video are real time, and interaction between sites is strongly encouraged to promote a sense of community and camaraderie. For most students, this is their first experience in an IDL room. On the first day they tend to be shy about being seen on TV and interacting with the teacher and the other sites on TV, but the second day everyone seems comfortable with the situation. As a student once said, "You just talk to the TV and it talks right back to you."

Procedure I, Teaching Colors and Shapes:

Each group of children has a set of the colors and shapes so that every child receives four or five to manipulate. The words for triangle and square are fun to learn, as they literally mean "three-corner" and "four-corner." When the teacher counts the corners with exaggerated gestures and pronounces the words, students grasp the concept immediately.

The teacher introduces the colors two or three at a time in four steps:

1) Pronouncing the words while showing the color and asking the students for nonverbal responses to commands, such as *Kiiroi wo totte.* (Pick up the yellow one.)
2) Then soliciting yes/no answers: *Shikaku wa chairoi desu ka? Iie. Shikaku wa kuroi desu ka? Hai.* (Is the square brown? No. Is the square black? Yes.)
3) Asking either/or questions: *Maru wa akai ka shiroi? Akai.* (Is the circle white or red? Red.)
4) Finally asking the students to produce the words independently: *Kore wa nani iro desu ka. Kiiroi.* (What color is this? Yellow.)

As each new color is introduced, the teacher also personalizes the colors by drawing attention to any child wearing something of that color or to objects in the room of that color. It is treated as a kind of game, moving rather quickly and with lots of repetitions. The children probably hear each color word repeated 12–15 times before producing it for the first time.

Because the teacher is manipulating the movement of the cameras from a control panel at her desk, as well as teaching, it does not work well for the teacher to move around the room a lot. This would leave those at the remotes sites looking at a camera view of where the teacher has been instead of where she is, and they would feel left out and disconnected. Therefore, it is more effective for the teacher to do most of the teaching from a seated position at the teacher console, allowing for a good camera close up and easy access to the camera control panel. This, however, has the potential of being pretty boring for the students, so modifications to

"You just talk to the TV and it talks right back to you."

She has occasionally been known to dance right off the chair and under the desk. . . .

teaching style should be adopted to hold students' attention and to make the lesson captivating and fun.

For example, when introducing word pairs that sound similar, such as *kuroi* (black) and *shiroi* (white), the teacher begins what has come to be known as the "color jam" by slowly and distinctly showing the colors and saying the words, then asking the students to repeat them with her, gradually getting faster and introducing a beat or rhythm and losing herself in the song. Her eyes close, she dances (still seated) and still showing each color as it is said. She has occasionally been known to dance right off the chair and under the desk, but students can still see her alternate hands coming up with the colors and can still hear the song. Finally, something snaps her out of her trance and she acts a little embarrassed and very businesslike as she asks the children to produce the names of those colors—which they now know without hesitation.

One of the special challenges to teaching colors over television is that the colors may be distorted by the cameras. Initially it might seem logical to hold up two colors that are dissimilar, such as blue and yellow, so that each can be clearly seen. That solution doesn't really work because, even though it is possible to clearly distinguish the light color from the dark color, it is not always possible to tell what the dark color is. Instead, it is more effective to work with the colors in three groups after they have all been individually introduced: 1) red, orange, yellow, and pink; 2) blue, purple, and green; and 3) black, brown, and white.

Procedure II, Culture through Literature:

Introducing and practicing all the colors takes about 45 minutes. Then the teacher changes the pace by reading the story *A Carp for Kimiko*. The book is written in English and describes two holidays in Japan—Girl's Day and Children's Day (formerly known as Boy's Day)—and the customary activities associated with each. The book has illustrations showing a typical Japanese home. Reading a book to such a large group is much easier in an IDL setting than in a traditional setting, as the pages in the book may be shown in the document camera and the students see them larger than life on the TV screens. If the picture-in-picture (PIP) option is available, the teacher can show herself in a corner of the screen and the book in the large portion of the screen. If PIP is not available, it is a good idea to switch back and forth between the teacher camera and the document camera to help keep the students engaged.

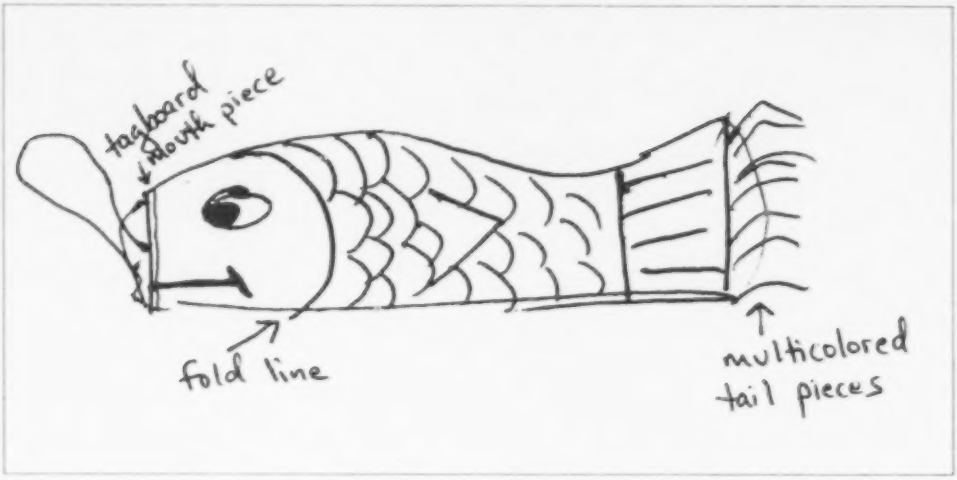
Procedure III, Culture through Crafts:

In Japan on Children's Day, families display a carp kite for each male member of the family. As a follow-up to the story and to reinforce the new color vocabulary, the students will make carp like the ones flown from high poles in Japan.

In preparation for the craft activity, a facilitator at each site has cut carp shapes, using a full sheet of tissue paper, folded lengthwise, for each carp (see Fig.1) and has then glued a tag board strip about 1" wide to the inside of each mouth. The children have seen pictures of the traditional carp in *A Carp for Kimiko* and are given some basic instructions about placement of the eye and how to draw scales and tails.

Using magic markers, each student colors a design on one side of a carp (remember to put newspapers down on the desks first as the color bleeds through the tissue). When the carp is turned over, the student can see the design where markers have bled through, making the second side easy to complete. The student then opens up the carp and glues multicol-

Figure 1. Making a colorful carp kite



ored tissue streamers (20 or so) along the inside of the tail edge. The student folds the carp again on the original fold line, glues the whole belly edge closed with a glue stick, being sure to keep both the mouth and tail ends open. Finally, the student punches two holes on opposite sides of the mouth opening and makes a yarn tie.

Students' carp can be displayed by hanging them on a wall or from the ceiling. And, of course, a carp will bravely "swim" when the student runs while holding onto the yarn tie!

Each carp is a unique and beautiful work of art. Some look like traditional Japanese carp, while others wear make-up or hats, or otherwise reflect the personalities of their creators.

Assessment:

During the hour that the students are working on their carp, the teacher assesses each student's understanding of colors by asking, in English, "In Japanese, what color is the body of your carp? What colors did you use to decorate it? What colors are the streamers?" Responses can be recorded on a student checklist.

Note: *For additional information, contact Colleen Brooks, 413 W. Quincy, Pittsburg, KS 66762; 316-232-2495; Fax: 316-724-6938; E-mail: colleen.brooks@greenbush.org.*

Each carp is a unique and beautiful work of art.

Classroom Resources

Magazines in French and in Spanish

Magazines published by Bayard Presse Internationale.

Available from Marie-Caroline Russell, Bayard Presse, 9709 Sotweed Drive, Potomac, MD 20854; 301-299-5920; Fax: 301-983-8917. Costs vary, however, for example, a one-year subscription to Popi is $69. (Magazines are also available in Chinese.)

French

Bayard Presse Internationale specializes in high-quality story/game magazines for children, teenagers, and young adults. These magazines, published in France, are specifically geared to the interests of various age groups, and their purpose is educational, not commercial.

Popi, *Pomme d'Api*, and *Youpi* are magazines for children 3–8 years old. *Popi* and *Pomme d'Api* are charmingly illustrated with bright colors. Each issue follows a new story about a familiar character, *Petit Ours Brun* or *Léo*, written in simple language. There are activities, such as creating mobiles, solving puzzles, decorating, and cooking, and a science or nature lesson on topics that are appropriate to children of this age. A recent issue of *Youpi* contains articles about how wheels work; how to construct simple machines; the work of a *factrice*, a postwoman, who is also a person of color; and there is a section on koala bears. Teachers will find a wealth of materials that could be adapted to classroom use.

Astrapi is for the 7–11 age group. It follows the same principles as the books for younger readers. The feature article in one issue concerns the "secrets of the Atlantic Ocean" and includes a poster in bright colors detailing interesting facts about the ocean. There are puzzles, recipes, cartoons, and stories to read. The focus is always on instructing children in attractive ways.

Okapi is for young teens. A 1998 issue, for example, includes features on Matt Damon and rap music, a big spread on the multicultural roots of French students today, and a poster of Leonardo de Caprio.

Je Bouqine is for those who already know enough French to read short texts in the target language. The November 1998 issue contains, for example, a novel, a short story, and a comic book version of the Count of Monte Cristo.

Finally, *Plantète Jeune* and *Phosphore* are for older teens, with articles on everything from the French economy to questions of health and relationships. Here too, the presentation is lively, attractive, and more sober than ordinary teen magazines. These articles could provide interesting reading for older students. They could also be used with less-advanced students to provide them with experiences in guessing at meaning from context.

Spanish

Reportero Doc is a small-format magazine that is published in Spain. It is full of social studies and science information and beautiful color photographs and illustrations. Often the information is in the form of a simple story. Teachers can use various issues of the magazine to learn facts for thematic units they are preparing or writing; e.g., about the solar system, penguins, frogs in the rain forest, and the Incas, Mayas, and Aztecs. Because all of the text is in Spanish, the magazine is an excellent source for the topic-specific terminology that might not be part of every teacher's vocabulary. Many of the sections could also be used effectively in elementary school or immersion classes.

Popi and *Caracola* are story and game magazines. Although they are intended for preschool native speakers, they include many sections applicable to FLES classes. The colorful illustrations are usually not too juvenile for older students. One issue of *Popi* features a story by Helen Oxenbury, *¡Nieve qué sorpresa!;* a short description about *la gallina* and her sound, *cooo-co-co*; a page of pictures of snowmen with instructions *(Busca el muñeco de nieve que no tiene sombrero. Después él que no tiene bufanda.)*; a simple story, *Oso pardo está a gusto en su casa*; an illustration of a musical stuffed monkey with rebus text that describes his instruments and their sounds; a card game with the object of matching pictures with the same silhouette; a *Veo Veo* section that describes illustrations featuring opposite words, *pequeño/grande, lleno/vacío,* and *triste/contento.* The back cover contains the illustrated story of *Lolo el lobito* waking up in the morning *(Lolo el lobito pone las orejas tiesas. . . Lolo el lobito enseña los dientes. . . Lolo el lobito aúlla con todas sus fuerzas, ¡AUUU!. . . Lolo el lobito echa a correr . . .Y mamá le abraza para darle los buenos días.)*

One issue of *Caracola*, which has longer stories and a bit more complicated language than *Popi*, features stories *(Las aventuras de la familia Chuchu Fleta, Un piojito muy lindo, Oso pardo y las oscuridad, La función, El gran oso verde y los tres ositos, Carolina Cremolina y la caja)* and an information story about the yak. The magazine also includes a series of games with ghosts; a mini-puzzles card game with the cards depicting four charmingly illustrated families on one side and bright, colorful shapes on the other; and a guess-the-photo task with colored enlargements of photos of different kinds of nuts.

The language is simple enough to use in elementary school classes in which students have had some previous language study. Each issue promises to give teachers many ideas and wonderful resources for their classes.

Calendar

Summer 2000 Courses and Workshops

June 15–19, 2000
National FLES Institute II. University of Maryland Baltimore County. Gladys Lipton, 1000 Hilltop Cir., Baltimore, MD 21250; 301-231-0824; Fax: 301-230-2652; E-mail: lipton@umbc2.umbc.edu.

June 19–23, 2000
National FLES Institute I. University of Maryland Baltimore County. Gladys Lipton, 1000 Hilltop Cir., Baltimore, MD 21250; 301-231-0824; Fax: 301-230-2652; E-mail: lipton@umbc2.umbc.edu.

July 5–15, 2000
Temas Añejos: Recurring Themes in Ancient, Colonial, and Modern Latin America. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu.

July 24–August 3, 2000
K–6 Foreign Languages: Leading the Way with Teacher Preparation. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu.

August 5–13, 2000
New Technologies in the Foreign Language Classroom. Iowa State University, Ames, IA. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Forgn Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu.

Where Are NNELL's 1,063 Members Located?

This map shows the distribution of NNELL's 1999–2000 members by state. To find out who your regional NNELL representative is, see the inside back cover of the journal. E-mail your regional rep to find out who your state rep is and how to contact them. Or, go to the NNELL website (www.educ.iastate.edu/nnell) for contact information on your regional and state reps. Work with them to encourage early language learning in your state and region!

NNELL is an organization for educators involved in teaching foreign languages to children. The mission of the organization is to promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to their own. NNELL provides leadership, support, and service to those committed to early language learning and coordinates efforts to make language learning in programs of excellence a reality for all children.

NNELL works to accomplish this mission through activities that improve public awareness and support of early language learning. NNELL facilitates cooperation among organizations directly concerned with early language learning; facilitates communication among teachers, teacher educators, parents, program administrators, and policymakers; and disseminates information and guidelines to assist in developing programs of excellence.

NNELL holds its annual meeting at the fall conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Its officers are elected by members through a mail ballot election held annually in the spring.

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